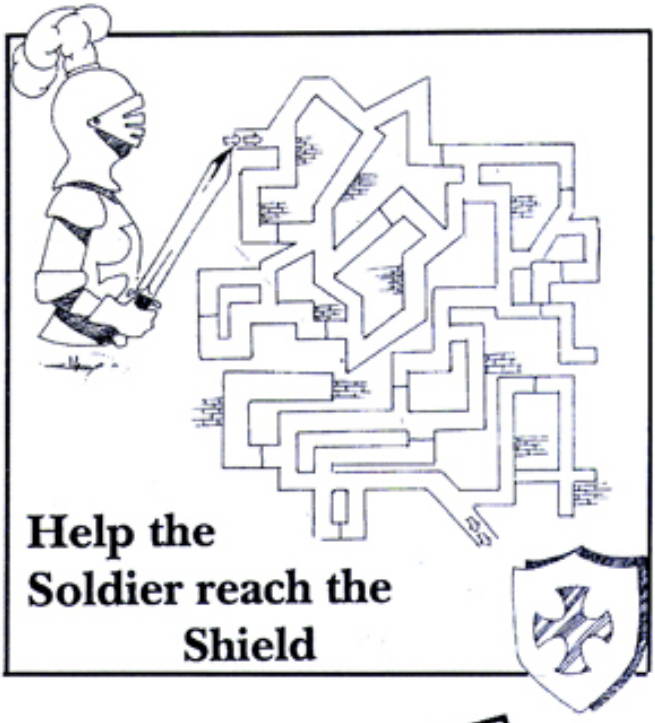
GOKULAM

ARCH 2000 *The monthly magazine for children* Rs. 6/-

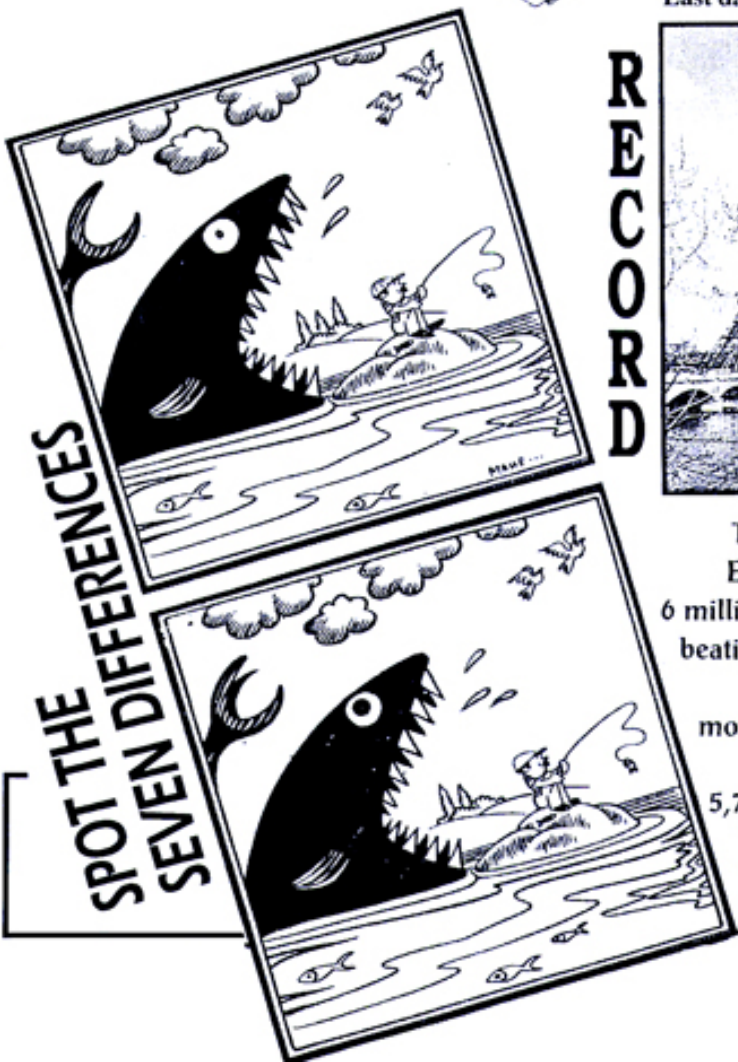
ANGELS WHO SAVED LIVES



Help the Soldier reach the Shield

Frame a joke in about 30 words for the above picture. Send it to the address given on Pg. 80 of this issue. The best joke will receive Rs. 25. All below age 16 can participate. Include your name, age or class, name of school and house address. Last date : April 10, 2000.

SPOT THE SEVEN DIFFERENCES



RECORD VISITORS

The landmark iron-laced Eiffel Tower has attracted 6 million visitors during 1998, beating its own record a world's most popular monument. The 320 metre Eiffel Tower had drawn 5,747,357 visitors in 1992.

Answer : 1. Fish's eye, 2. Small fishes, 3. Water drops, 4. Shoes, 5. Cap, 6. Tree, 7. Fish tail.

GOKULAM

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MARCH
2000

Dear children,

Do you know that all the educational institutions in the state of Tamilnadu was closed for a day in February? Why? As a mark of sympathy to three girl students belonging to the Tamilnadu Agricultural University who were burnt alive while sitting in their college bus. They did not have the time to jump out of the bus to escape the inferno caused by an angry mob which came on a motorcycle with petrol cans and match boxes.

This tragic incident in Dharmapuri, immediately followed a court judgement against Jayalalitha, former Chief Minister of Tamilnadu. Besides being contempt of court, such arson and widespread damage of public property is also a crime against society.

It might be argued that partymen become emotionally charged when their leader is prosecuted. But don't leaders of political parties have a duty to control their partymen and advise them against taking law into their own hands? That goondas exist in all parties does not reduce the seriousness of the crime perpetrated.

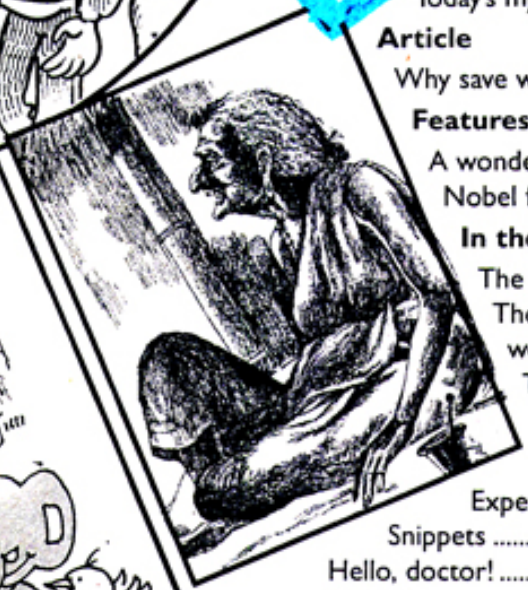
It is necessary for you to remember this, not only because the victims were students like you, but also because they belonged to this society which basically wants peace and harmony.

That students should not indulge in politics need not make you blind to happenings around you. Studying and passing exams, are the twin duties of students. Politics is not your main concern now, but the day is not far when you will be eligible to vote. You must be aware of events good and bad,so that when the time comes you will be able to make right decisions. You must develope the capacity to judge the character of leaders and their parties, for, the future belongs to you. Atleast in the coming years politics must be free from violence, so that we have a healthy democratic society.

Love,

K. Rajendran,
Editor

Of all created things the loveliest,
And most divine are children.
— William Canton



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Cover Illustration : JAYARAJ

✉ I am a Gokulam reader. I like all the articles as they improve my knowledge.

G. Prashanthsekar, age 13,
Sullurpeta.

✉ I want to send a serial. Should I send it by inland letter? Can I name the chapters?

R. Abhinav, Std. V,
DAV, GSSS, Chennai.

Dear Abhinav,

You must send your serial in full. Send it along with a stamped, self-addressed envelope if you want it returned to you in the event of non-publication. Mention your name, house address, age, class and name of school.

✉ I have been reading your magazine for three years. I like Undir stories and Fantasia. How do I send in articles and paintings?

D. Vandana, Std. IX,
R.S.K.HSS, Trichy.

Dear Vandana,

Read the reply given to Abhinav's letter. Also, do not send pencil sketches.

✉ I like Gokulam. Why do we have to wait for a month for another issue to reach our doorstep?

I. Vijay Kumar, Std. VIII C,
Santhome HSS, Chennai.

✉ May I send you computer print outs of my articles?

P.R. Arun, Std. X,
Christ Nagar School,
Trivandrum.

Dear Arun,

Sure. Don't forget the details mentioned in the reply to Abhinav's letter.

A suggestion

Why don't you give a brief sketch of the past episodes in serials like Fantasia? It'll help us recall the story easily.

Biswadip Dey, Std. IX,
Holy Cross School, Silchar.

LETTER BOX

CROSS WORD

Across:

1) Sugar bowl of the world (4)
3) Spice garden of India (6)
4) Thick (5)
6) Value (8)
8) A mammal which is an ant-eater (8)

Down:

2) Largest snake of South America (8)
5) Queen of the Adriatic (6)
7) Saint of the slums (6)

Sowmya, S., age 15,
St. Mary's Matric. Hr. Sec. School,
Cuddalore.

QUIZ

1.What is the other name for Universe?

2. Which state is called as 'wheat mine'?

3. Which is the layer that protects us from the ultraviolet rays of the sun?

4. Which is the highest gateway in India?

5. What are the materials that are released during nuclear test?

6. Who killed Mahatma Gandhi?

7. What causes Cholera?

8. Which is the Galaxy closest to Milky Way Galaxy?

H. Ambika, age 14,
R. Supriya, age 14,
St. Lourdes High School,
Bangalore.

PUZZLE PAGE

Match the scientists with their works

Scientists	Works
1. William Roentgen	a. Discovery of Penicillin
2. Hahnemann	b. Oral Polio Vaccine
3. Egaz Moniz	c. The science of genetics
4. Margaret Sanger	d. Mechanical heart
5. Dr. George Papanicolaau	e. Colour blindness test
6. Sir Alexander Fleming	f. Discovery of X-rays
7. S. Ishihara	g. First lobotomy
8. Gregor Mendel	h. Cervical smear test
9. Dr. Alexis Carrel	i. Introduction of homoeopathy
10. Dr. Albert Sabin	j. The world's first birth control clinic

Anurag Pillai, VII B, K.V. Pangode, Trivandrum.

FIND SEVEN GEOMETRY RELATIONS

A	U	T	S	E	J	E	A	D	R
O	N	R	U	E	P	L	F	H	U
S	Z	G	V	R	Z	C	K	N	W
Q	B	H	L	G	X	R	P	S	Z
U	F	I	K	E	W	I	X	Y	B
A	J	O	L	D	S	C	T	A	V
R	E	C	T	A	N	G	L	E	Q
E	R	A	D	I	U	S	I	J	O
S	A	K	B	Q	T	Y	C	E	G
T	R	I	A	N	G	L	E	S	B

SOLUTION ON PAGE 80

P. Anusha, Std. IX, Hindu SSS, Chennai.

Pandu : Yesterday my hen laid 2 eggs.

Bandu : So, what. Three days ago my father laid a foundation stone.

X. Sindhuja, R.S.K.HSS , Trichy.

Shoba notices two thugs in Ramanlal's garden. She returns from a vacation and learns that Ramanlal is in police custody. He has murdered two men. Shoba teams up with her cousin and his friends to find the truth.

Part II

The children decided to begin their investigation at the police station. When they reached the police station they found that the inspector had not arrived yet.

A constable was working on some files at a table. His name was Rajan. He did not like the children probing. The children were not giving up either. Finally, the constable said, "Yes. He has confessed to the crime. But the evidences don't point in his direction."

The children were disappointed. The constable wasn't saying much. They trooped out of the police station after thanking the constable.

That evening they met again at Shoba's house. The children sat in the lawn where they would be out of the earshot of Shoba's mother.

Mukesh spoke up first. "I think we should check the garden for clues."

Arvind said, "the garden has been sealed. We can't scale the walls either. The glass pieces on the wall will make it impossible".

"Let's start by talking to Ramu kaka's neighbours," Shoba suggested. "Perhaps they'd know something about the murder."

"What about the address?"

"We'll find the house," Rakesh said with more confidence than he felt.

That evening the boys somehow managed to locate Ramu kaka's house. The next morning the children broke up into pairs. The

The third part should reach us by 10/03/2000. Word limit - 350. Address - see pg. 80 of this issue. Hint : Make a plausible connection between the murders.

K. Arathy wins Rs. 100/-

girls met one of Ramu kaka's neighbours.

They knocked on the ancient, dilapidated door next to Ramu kaka's house. An old woman answered. "What do you want?"

The girls said, "we are looking for Ramu kaka."

"Ramu kaka?" the woman knit her brows. Then she said, "Oh, Ramanlal. Well what about him? Poor man was a kind soul. His wife died long ago and his son was killed. Poor chap. Murder they said"

She cackled. The girls took a step backwards. Sameera checked Shoba as she tripped on the steps. "He loved his roses like he'd his child. I don't believe he's capable of murder."

The girls were pleased with the progress they had made.

The boys too were in luck. The middle aged couple knew Ramu kaka well. "The old man's son was killed. Some say it's an accident.

But," the woman lowered, her voice and whispered, "we know he was murdered. The rowdies have been roughing up Ramanlal for atleast a year now."

The children exchanged notes as they returned home. Obviously the neighbours linked the twin murders to the death of Ramu kaka's son. But who was the murderer? Was Ramu kaka's rose garden so necessary that.... Also, how did Ramu kaka's son die? ***(To continue)***

ROSE GARDEN MYSTERY

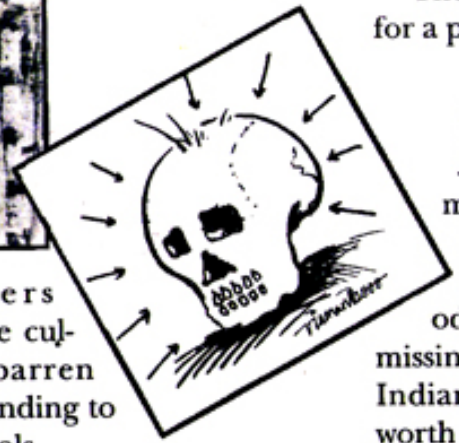
K. Arathy, Std. V B,
KV No. 1, Pondicherry.

Idol for Hanuman

A 33 feet idol of Hanuman has been erected in Navi Mumbai. It is the tallest Hanuman idol in the country. The sculpture has been carved out of a single granite stone.

'Cast off' experiment

Thirty six British volunteers were cast away like Robinson Crusoe on an island destered for almost a century. The experiment is being conducted to find out how people can cope without modern-day stores. They are, however, equipped with sat phones. The group comprises 28 adults and eight children. The volunteers spend time cultivating barren soil and tending to farm animals.



Year of the Dragon

This Chinese year, beginning Feb. 5, is the year of the Dragon. Festivities marked the arrival of the new year. Chinese communities in Australia, Indonesia, Malaysia, India, etc., and Koreans celebrated the new year.

They visited temples and prayed for a prosperous year.

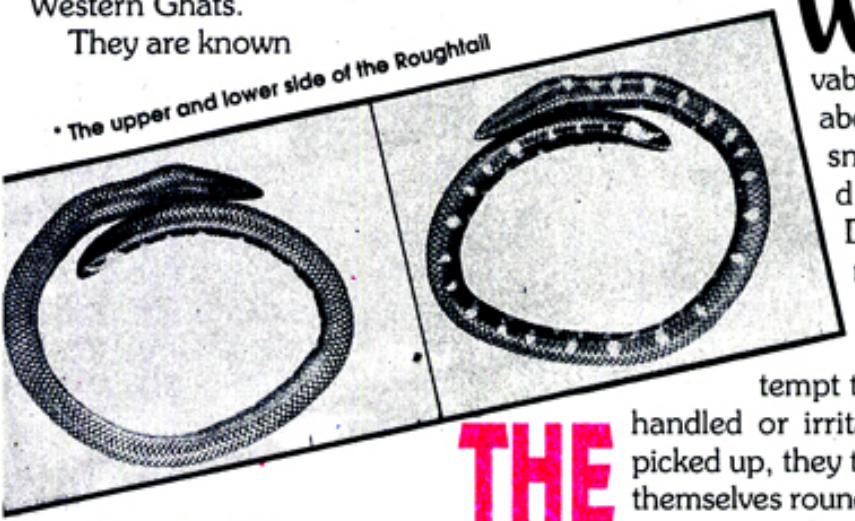
Prize over a head

A fist-sized severed head is missing from a museum for oddities. The museum, *Ripley's Believe it or not*, houses oddities from world over. The missing head is of south-American Indian origin. The rare head is worth $ 16,800. The museum has announced a reward of C$ 1000 (Canadian dollars) for information leading to the return of the specimen.

THE ROUGHTAILS

Roughtails are pretty, harmless burrowing snakes. They are found only under stones, in deep muddy soil and in the leaf litter of the forests and foot-hills of the Western Ghats.

They are known as 'Roughtails' because of their peculiar tail which ends in a spiny tip. These snakes are small in size, never exceeding one metre in length. In keeping with their mode of existence in the soil, they are characterised by short and rigid cylindrical bodies and tiny eyes.



• The upper and lower side of the Roughtail

The striking features are the wedge-shaped head and the stumpy tail. This is why they have become expert burrowers in soft earth. They are brilliantly coloured-red, orange or yellow - and some black forms are remarkable for their iridiscence - displaying colours of a rainbow - when exposed to the sun.

They feed on soft bodied soil-living arthropods such as insects, termites and their larvae. They also feed on earthworms. Most of them produce their young alive. A few lay eggs.

What is most unbelievable and unique about these rare snakes is their disposition. Devoid of a neck to raise, they will never attempt to bite even if handled or irritated. When picked up, they try to entwine themselves round the captor's fingers and enjoy being carried to long distances in that position.

About 44 kinds of these snakes are known from just two parts of the world - the mountainous tracts of Tamil Nadu, Kerala, Karnataka and Goa in India and Srilanka. India is home to as many as 33 kinds. These unique and pretty harmless snakes have become rare because of the decreasing forest cover.

Even today if you happen to turn up a loose stone in and around Kodaikanal or Ooty you may be in for a surprise. You can feast your eyes on the thumb-sized worm snake wriggling its way in the soil.

TSN Murthy, Chennai.

EXPERIE

A VISIT TO SRINGERI

After a long time we went on a vacation. The trip to Sringeri was eventless. We reached the town early in the morning. After completing our morning chores, we visited the Sharadamba temple. We stopped by the Tunga river and watched the colourful fish in the river.

We had dinner at the temple, which was a break from mother's routine food at home. Then we left for Udupi. We have friends at Udupi, so after a visit to Lord Krishna's temple (I prayed for good results of course) we had lunch at the temple. On our way back home, we visited the beach at Ullal and Mangalore. Though a short trip, it holds pleasant memories for me.

S. Ambika, Std. IX, Mariam Nilaya HS, Bangalore.

Caught in a cyclone

On October 29 when father stepped out of the house he asked us to shut all doors and windows. He is a television reporter. He went off to do his duty. Mother and I shut all windows. But I left my window open because I wanted to experience the cyclone. A large tree fell

NCE

AGE NO BAR

It was a saturday. We had been practising for a cricket match that was to be held that day. The match began at the stipulated time. I started with a huge six and three fours in the first over. My partner was the only big boy in the team. The rest of the team consisted of the IV and the V standard boys about whom I did not harbour much hope. I was stumped when I was just short of one run to 50. I was disappointed. In the 10-over match our team scored 52 for 2.

While fielding, I was hurt. The captain asked me to rest. But I continued because I thought the younger boys wouldn't be able to hold on very long. But I was proved wrong. The younger boys fielded excellently. Our team won the match. The opponent team were all out for 21. That day I learnt that one should never underestimate youngsters. They could prove to be much better than the bigger boys!

J. Pavan Kumar, Coimbatore.

Dear Pavan, pl. send in your class details and the name of your school.

with a dull thud into our garden. I rushed to the hall when I heard another thud. My mother was picking up books and artifacts. The bookshelf had fallen in the wind. The rain had wet my books.

Soon, the cyclone's intensity increased. Mother cooked food and I tried my best to eat. The raging cyclone was so fearsome that I lost my appetite.

Father's mobile phone did not work. Our telephone too did not function. Father came late in the night. He narrated horrifying stories. The next day father brought in reports and footage of people who had fallen victims to the cyclone.

Many areas were totally devastated by the cyclone. The magnitude of the super cyclone left us speechless. This was the first cyclone I had encountered. I don't want it to happen again.

Shilpi Sampad, age 11, Bubaneshwar.

Wrong call

Once mother had to go to the market. I was alone and it scared me very much. Suddenly the phone rang, making me jump. I picked up the receiver. I said hello twice but there was no reply from the other end.

I placed the receiver back in the cradle. A few minutes later, the phone rang. This time too nobody

The missing slide

It was the first class after lunch. We sat in the zoology laboratory rather quietly. The heavy lunch had made us silent for a while. The internal assessment of practical examination was to be done shortly. A sumptuous meal hadn't dimmed our concentration yet. We were well-prepared for the test.

"Now, you can see him," the teacher remarked. Each of us went up to the microscope. The silence in the class was broken by the shuffle of the students' feet and the rustle of clothes as they walked up one after the other to the microscope.

I too looked. I could see nothing. I blinked hard and looked again. I could still see nothing. As I returned to my seat, my friend looked at me with a smug smile. She had seen the micro-organism, I presumed. She appeared so confident!

I observed the rest of my classmates as each one went to the microscope and returned. Each face registered excitement, assurance and confidence. I broke into a cold sweat. Obviously I was the only one who was confused.

The answer sheets were distributed. What could the organism be? I had no clue. I then remembered the lab attendant talking to the lecturer about some amoeba culture. Having no choice, I wrote as neatly as possible all that I knew about amoebas, including the colour of the stain.

The answer sheets were collected and the teacher busied herself with the evaluation. All the students crowded around the class topper. What had she seen under the microscope? She said that it was amoeba proteins. There were relieved sighs from girls. They too had written the same answer. Ex-

EXPERIENCE

answered from the other side. I was very scared indeed. I imagined a thief stalking the street.

He had probably noticed mother go out of the house. He probably knew that I was alone at home. When the phone rang the third time, I was prepared to confront the invisible intruder. I picked up the receiver and yelled into it.

After a few seconds when I stopped to breathe, someone from the other end began shouting. It was only after a few minutes that I realised that it was my aunt. I explained to her what had happened.

She, however, thought I was being rude. Since then, I don't yell into the phone no matter what.

V.R. Rajashree, Std. VII, SAV, Trichy.

cept one girl. We turned to her. What had she written? She blushed and said, "nothing". We burst into laughter at her response.

The teacher called out the marks. To our amazement the teacher had awarded full marks to the girl who had written nothing. The rest of us had scored zero. The teacher began to talk. We hung on to each syllable she uttered. "The slide was in my hand. So, it is highly improbable that you really saw what you thought you saw."

It was not the loss of ten marks that bothered us. Each of us had known the right answer and had not had the courage to write it down. This is what upset us most.

The girl whom we had all laughed at had taught us an important lesson which we won't forget in a hurry - that we should be honest and do the right thing, even if it is absurd.

Retold from an article by Gowri Srinivasa in the New Indian Express

If you have such interesting anecdotes do send in to us. We will publish them.

A WONDERFUL

One phenomenon which has emerged as the most spectacular of all scientific inventions is the computer. It has revolutionised human life.

The motive behind the invention of computers was to devise a time-saving system. The calculation of astronomical figures was difficult. Man wished for a system which could store information and work out solutions on command.

The Babylonian merchants were the first in Asia Minor to devise the Abacus system. It helped them work out calculations. Logarithms were the next important stage in the development of computers. After Napier, who invented logarithms in 1614, came William Ooghtred (in 1620) with the slide rule. Blaise Pascal developed a model of a fast calculating machine in 1642, which consisted of a row of tooth-wheels, numbered 0 to 9. The basic principles on which this machine was developed were that (i) carry-over could be made automatically and (ii) multiplication of numbers could be performed by repeated addition.

In 1804, Joseph Jaquard, a French textile manufacturer, invented a system. Patterns woven by the loom could be determined by placement of

holes in a control card. This may be called a precursor of the punch card system. This system was developed to perfection in 1887 by Hollieth through his census machine device. A computer called EDVAC (Electronic Discrete Variable Automatic Computer) was developed in 1940 based on ideas given by Numan. It was followed by another computer EDSAC (Electronic Delay Automatic Computer) ten years later in the university of Manchester.

This is the second prize winning entry in the millennium contest announced in September 1999.

Between 1946 and 1959, computers, though still large became operational. To comprehend the systematic growth of computers since World War II, we must divide the past 50 years into five stages.

* Schools and colleges are into teaching about computers

replaced vacuum tubes. Magnetic cores replaced magnetic drums. Data could be located and retrieved within millionths of a second.

In 1964, IBM announced the use of IC (integrated circuit). Many users could use the central computer at the same time and obtain instantaneous results. Computers that were

• Super computers can be found in Indian institutions

Computers during the initial stages (1945 - 60) were large and unwieldy. They could not be relied upon either. The computers often got heated during extended use.

This necessitated special conditioners to keep the heat under control. The vacuum tubes used had a short life.

CHAPTER

Punched cards were used to enter data into the computer. The programme was stored in magnetic drums. The uses of computer was limited to preparing payrolls and billings.

Between 1951 and 1965, transistors introduced after 1971, were an advance on earlier prototypes. Chips replaced magnetic core and provided faster processing speeds. Electronic components used in computers were further miniaturised.

Computers made after 1990 use microprocessors. They possess artificial intelligence. They can use stored reservoirs of knowledge for making expert judgements and decisions.

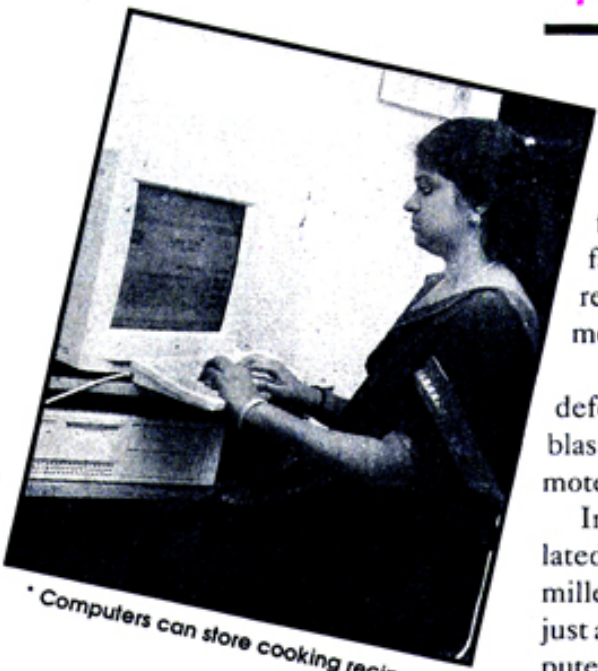
Outer space exploration would have

been impossible had it not been for computerised devices. They help to launch and monitor the rockets and launchers sent into space.

Today, all our techniques and modes of clinical and microbiological investigations are based on computer applications.

Computers perform numerous functions - from handling payrolls to stock control analysis and financial speculations. Every fiscal activity is now globally governed and regulated by computers.

Computers have helped to develop new strains of music. We can also learn various languages at the press of a button.



• Computers can store cooking recipes

Computers assist in regulating traffic and booking of cargo and travellers across the globe. Compositions and symphonies in music are stored for retrieval when necessary. Inter-language translations have helped the world develop greater understanding.

Computers are now used widely in the management of homes too. They perform sundry functions like keeping track of family spendings, storing, cooking recipes, addresses and upkeep and monitoring of household appliances.

Computers help in the location of defence troops, in surveillance and in blasting enemy positions through remote control.

In Japan high-speed trains are regulated through computers. In the third millennium computers will serve man just as the genie served Alladin. Computers may run errands without written commands.

Unexplored parts of the uni- verse will be laid bare before us. We may be able to find out the causes for diseases and diagnose the maladies afflicting humanity. Computers are a wonderful chapter in human life.

Zeeshan M. Fatmi,
Std. VIII B,
St. Xavier's H.S., Adipur.

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THE FOOLISH

Deva verma was the king of Devapuri. He was a foolish king. Sometimes he made decisions that greatly undermined the kingdom and the treasury.

Once the king decided to visit the prison. As he walked through the prison, he wondered if all the people in the prison were culprits or if he had made a mistake in his judgement.

He stood in the middle of the prison and asked loudly, "Is there anybody in the prison who has not committed any crime but has yet been punished?"

THE KING WONDERED IF HE WAS MAKING A MISTAKE....

The king had not even finished his sentence when a prisoner cried, "I have been wrongly punished"

The king looked at the prisoner. "Tell me the truth. Why were you punished?"

The prisoner bowed and replied, "Your majesty, I'll tell you the truth. One night, around 12

KING

o'clock, I was in need of money. I decided to approach my neighbour. I went to his house. The door was closed. I did not want to disturb him. So, I slipped in through the window. When I saw that my neighbour was asleep, I decided it was not correct to disturb him. I went to the almirah and tried to open it. My neighbour had woken up by then. He saw me and shouted "thief, thief" The commotion brought the neighbours into the house. I was handed over to your soldiers. They put me in prison. Your majesty, only you can help me to get out of here." The prisoner fell at the king's feet.

The king was deeply moved by the prisoner's tale. He wiped his tears away. The poor man had merely approached his neighbour for money.

He had been imprisoned for such a silly crime! He ordered the soldiers to release the prisoner.

The prisoner laughed heartily once he was out of the prison. He went back to his old ways.

M.N. Sabitha, age 11,
The National HS, Hyderabad.

SNIPPETS

Some record this!

Australian ultra-distance runner, Gary Parsons claimed the world continuous run record. On Dec. 16, 1999, he limped into Hobart and posted the 17,080 kms. mark. This is nine kms. more than that posted by an American in 1983.

Parsons is a builder in Queensland, Australia. He ran atleast 20 kms. a day for 235 days. He has used nearly 40 pairs of shoes. He averaged more than 70 kms. a day!

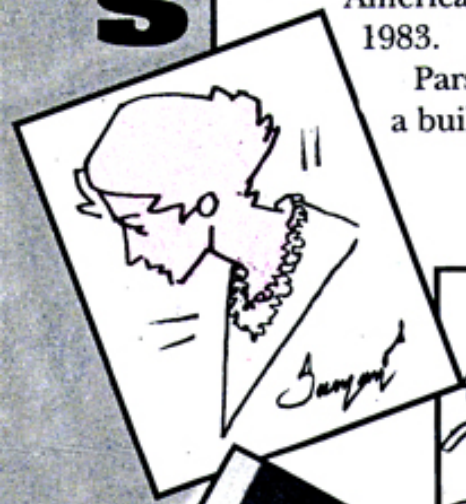
Jewels auctioned

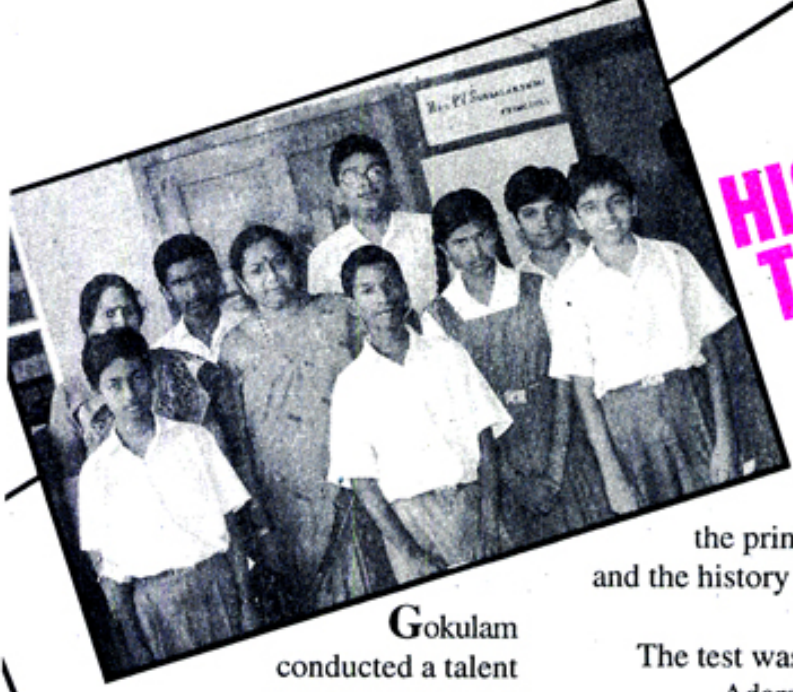
The swan lake jewels comprising a necklace and matching ear rings fetched $580,000 at an auction. The jewels, once owned by Princess Diana were auctioned at New York, last year.

Monkey business

An Iraqi ice-cream maker paid 35 million Dinars ($17,500) for a monkey. He was led to believe that the monkey's hairs could be sold for use in the princely sport of falcony.

The ice-





HISTORY TALENT TEST

Gokulam conducted a talent test for students of VIII and IX standard of a school in Chennai city in January. About 600 students participated in the test.

Featured here are the winners in the test along with the principal of the school and the history teacher of the said classes.

The test was conducted at Gill Adarsh MHSS, Chennai. Prizes were awarded to the winners and all participants received a complimentary copy of GOKULAM

cream maker was also duped into parting with $75 worth of ice-cream. The fraudster said the ice-cream was to feed the monkey!

Widest tunnel

The world's widest tunnel was opened seven months ahead of schedule. Sydney is now heaving a sigh of relief. Traffic conjestion has been taken care off.

The tunnel is 1.7 kms. long and 24.5 mts. wide. The tunnel allows motorists to bypass atleast 19 sets of traffic lights.

Father president

George Washington, the 'Father of America' never fathered any children. On the other hand, the tenth American President, John Tyler, had 15 children.

Styrofoam cups

More than 25 billion styrofoam cups are discarded each year. If placed end to end, they would circle the Earth 436 times.

Suresh K. Anjum, Calcutta.

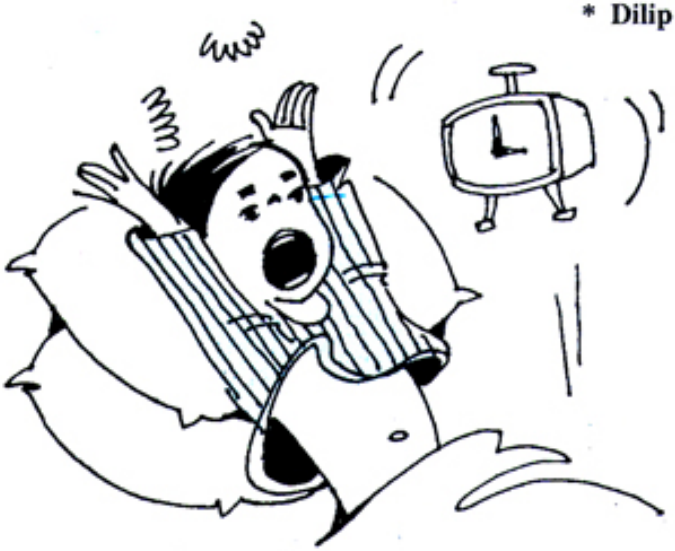
* **M. Neela Muhil Vanan, Chennai.**

? What is tonsil? How does it occur?

! Tonsil is a small mass of lymphoid tissue. There are various types of tonsils in our body. What the layman refers to as 'the tonsils' are the palatal tonsils. They are two rounded lymphoid masses situated on either side of the throat. They are normally bigger in children than in adults.

They play a vital role in the immune reaction of the body especially in the first five years of life. They give protection against the ingested and inspired bacteria by producing antibodies. Sometimes a bacteria called beta haemolytic streptococcus invades the tonsils and causes infection and inflammation resulting in the condition called 'tonsillitis'.

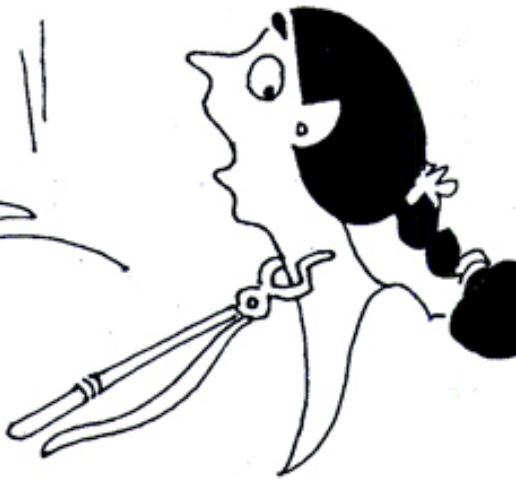
The classical features of acute tonsillitis are pain in the throat, difficulty in swallowing, fever and ear pain, usually lasting atleast four or five days. Proper antibiotic and analgesic therapy will cure acute tonsillitis. For the chronic tonsillitis surgery is the complete remedy.



Help me control hair loss. How does one develop better memory?

* **Dilip Bannerjee, Calcutta.**

? I am an 18 year old boy. I have been suffering from acute hair loss for the past three years. I am very worried. How can I grow my hair? Please advise.



! Since you are still young, it is possible that your hair may grow back. Meanwhile, find the cause of your problem. Check your diet. An inadequate diet may cause hair loss. Include proteins and iron-rich

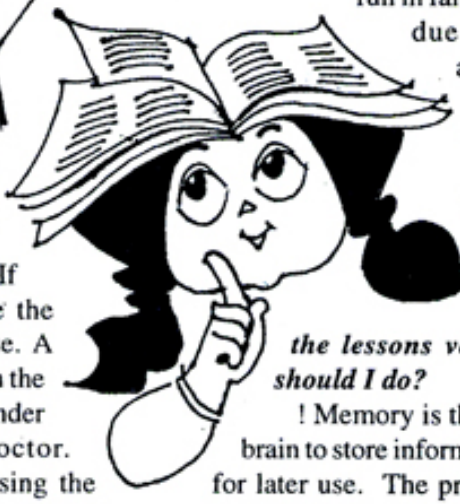
HELLO, DOCTOR!

food. Hair fall may be due to a severe illness like typhoid, shock, lack of sleep or general run-down condition. If any of these happens to be the cause, then eliminate the cause. A few hairtonics are available in the market. Try one of them under the supervision of a doctor. Remember, the results of using the hairtonics will show only after four months.

*** D. Johnson, Chennai.**

? Why do some people talk in their sleep?

! Sleep comprises two distinct physiological states - rapid eye movement (REM) sleep and non-REM sleep. Non-REM and REM form a cycle throughout the time we sleep. REM sleep is the stage during which most dreams occur. Some people react to the happenings during the dream. As a result, they talk for a few seconds and do not remember what they spoke when they wake up. Sleep - talking occurs in about one percent of children. It is more common among girls and tends to run in families. It is mainly due to stress and anxiety.

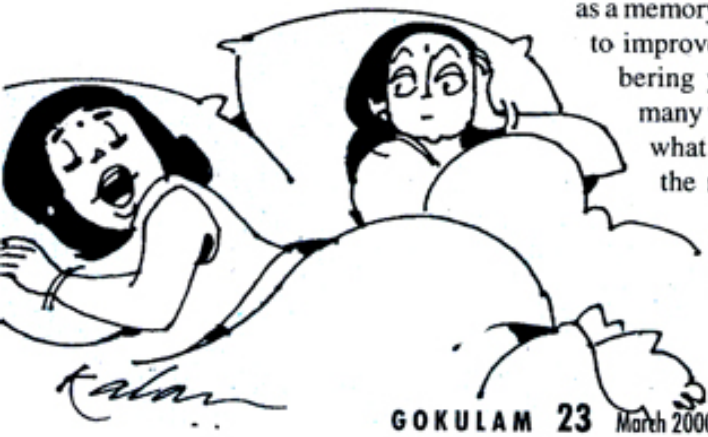


*** Tamanna Saina, Agra.**

? My memory is weak. Though I get seventh or eighth rank in class, I forget the lessons very soon. What should I do?

! Memory is the capacity of our brain to store information and retrieve for later use. The process of memory can be divided into four steps - learning, retention, forgetting and retrieval. The initial storage of information is called learning; keeping the new information is called retention; the loss of new information over a period of time is called forgetting and utilisation of stored information is called retrieval.

Memory is said to be stored in the brain as a memory trace. The only effective way to improve your memory or of remembering your lessons is to read them many times. Reflect immediately on what you have read. Recall them the next day. Review them with friends or teachers. These four 'R's (Reading, Reflect, Recall and Review) could certainly improve your



memory.

Boring things are more difficult to remember than information that is interesting and that which we can understand.

*** V. Ashwin, Thrissur.**

? I am studying in standard VII. I suffer from frequent headaches. It disturbs my studies. I have another problem. I cannot sit and study after 8 o'clock. I feel sleepy. What can I do, doctor?

! Headache may be caused due to various reasons. At your age anxiety, mental tension, fear, poor vision or malnutrition may be the main cause. Eliminate the cause first. Include protein-rich foods and vegetables in your daily diet. Eat a fruit every day. If the headache persists for a long time, you should consult a neurologist. As for the second problem the remedy is very simple. Go to bed at 8 p.m. Wake up early in the morning and study. What you study in the mornings is better retained by your brain.

How is a nose job done?

*** Savita Kumari, Kharagpur.**

? How is the plastic surgery of nose done?

! Plastic surgery of nose is of two types — 1) reconstructive surgery and 2) cosmetic surgery. **Reconstructive surgery:** Here surgery is done to restore form and function of the nose by correcting the deformity and disfigurement. It includes restoring normalcy to an abnormal part. Skin grafts and skin flaps are used. e.g., septoplasty.

In **cosmetic surgery**, the surgery is done to beautify the appearance of the nose. The nose functions normally and the face appears without any deformity. Skin grafts and flaps don't play a role in cosmetic surgery. Incisions are placed in less observable areas and most of the surgery is done under the skin. e.g., rhinoplasty.

Dr. G. Ganesan, Rajapalayam.

The following particulars regarding the ownership of 'GOKULAM' the English Monthly newspaper, are published, as called for by rule 8 of the Registration of Newspapers (Central) Rules 1956.

FORM IV

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Nationality	: Indian
Address	: 1, 5th Street, Lake Area, Nungambakkam, Chennai - 600 034.
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6. Names and addresses of individuals who own the newspaper and partners or shareholders holding more than one percent of the total capital : **Bharathan Publications Private Limited, 47, Jawaharlal Nehru Road, Ekkaduthangal, Chennai - 600 097.**

I hereby declare that the particulars given above are true to the best of my knowledge and belief.

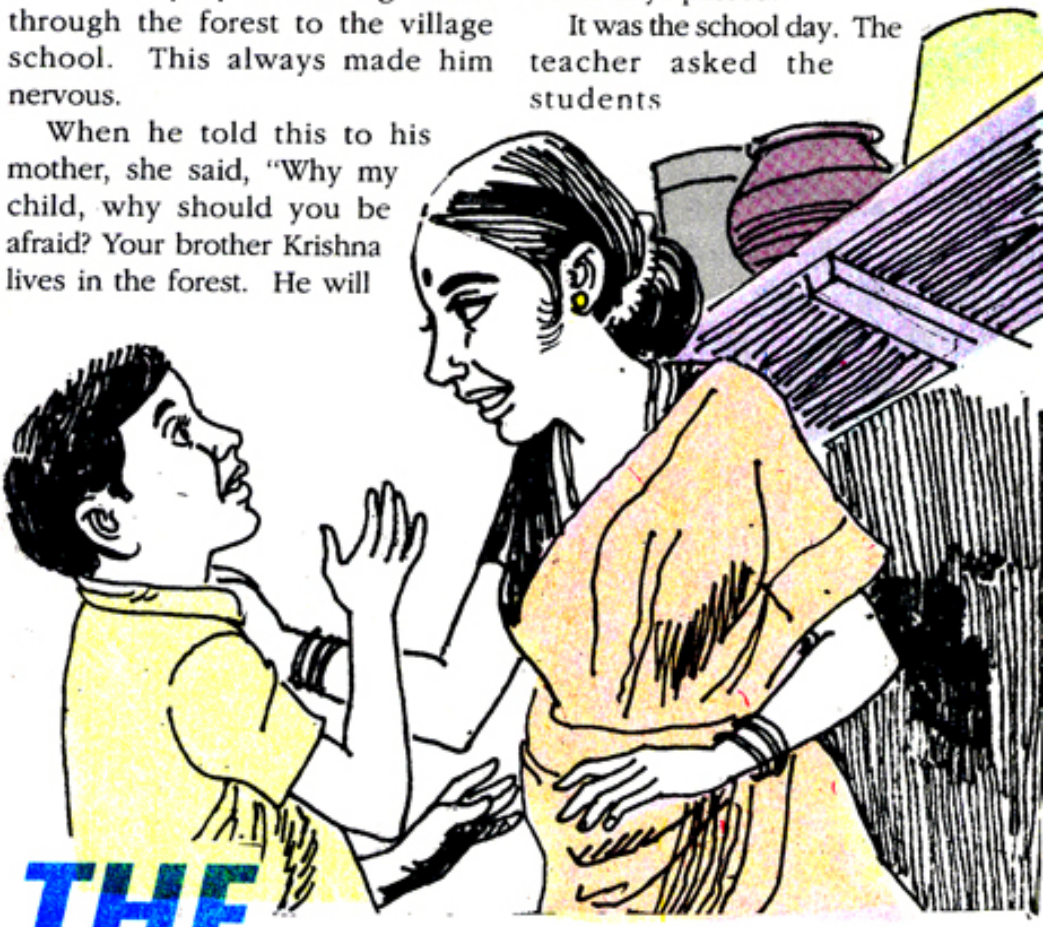
1.3.2000

K. Rajendran
Publisher

THE FOREST FRIEND

Gopal was a poor boy who had no father. He lived with his mother on the edge of the forest. Everyday he had to go alone through the forest to the village school. This always made him nervous.

When he told this to his mother, she said, "Why my child, why should you be afraid? Your brother Krishna lives in the forest. He will come as soon as you call him."



The boy, simple as he was, readily believed this and whenever he was afraid he would cry out, "Where are you Krishna dada?" Immediately a charming little boy would emerge from the forest saying, "here I am, my brother. What is there to be afraid of?" He would accompany Gopal through the forest, talking and playing with him. Gopal was happy. Some days passed.

It was the school day. The teacher asked the students to bring various things as presents to him on the occasion. Gopal's mother had nothing to send. Krishna dada, who noticed that Gopal was upset,

asked the reason. When Gopal revealed the reason, Krishna dada said, "wait here. I will be back in a minute".

Gopal didn't have to wait for even ten seconds. Krishna was back with a small pot of milk. He handed it over to Gopal saying, "Take this to the teacher".

When Gopal gave the pot to the teacher the teacher got angry. He scolded the boy severely. Even as the milk in the pot was emptied a strange thing happened.

The pot filled up with milk and the teacher was dumb-struck.

The teacher asked Gopal who had given him the pot. Gopal took the teacher to the forest where the teacher insisted that he wanted to see his friend Krishna.

At once Gopal called out, "Krishna dada, my teacher wants to see you. Please reveal yourself".

But though Gopal and his teacher waited for a long time, Krishna dada did not appear. Instead they heard a voice say, "You see me because of your simple faith. Your teacher is not qualified to see me, because his mind is not yet pure".

On hearing this, the teacher repented for his action. Gopal and Krishna dada remained friends for a few more years. When Gopal grew up he realised that the forest through which he walked every day was indeed a pleasant place to visit. It held no fear for him.

D. Johnson, age 13, KV No. 2, Chennai.

Name : M. Muthu Krishnan
Age : 17
Address : 11-C-3, Jothi Nagar III Street, Kovilpatti - 628 501.
Hobbies : Stamp collection, playing basketball, watching TV, listening to music.

Name : R. Aruna
Age : 10
Address : Plot No. 12, Krishnapuram Colony, 6th Cross Street, Next to NCC Officers Mess, Madurai - 14.
Hobbies : Singing, reading books, playing shuttle, watching TV.

Name : Gayathri Rajagopalan
Age : 14
Address : H-3/9, TNHB Flats, Thiruvalluvar Nagar, Thiruvanmiyur, Chennai - 41.
Hobbies : Making friends, travelling trekking, talking and eating, swimming, watching movies, going on long drives and stamp collection.

Name : Dwaipayan Roy
Age : 12
Address : C/o. Dr. D.J. Roy, 'Shivaprasad Dhoomappa Compound, Greenland Colony Pandeswar, Mangalore - 575 001.
Hobbies : Collecting stamps, reading books, watching television.

Name : S. Madhuvanthi
Age : 12
Address : 12, Arunachalam Road Kotturpuram, Chennai.
Hobbies : Listening to music, reading books and dancing.

Name : Aparna Kumar
Age : 14
Address : 24, Co-operative Colony, Near Park Sheraton, Alwarpet, Chennai - 600 018.

Hobbies : Reading books, listening to music, surfing the net.

Name : N. Indra Kirupa

Age : 13

Address : 120/7, CPWD Quarters, K.K. Nagar, Chennai - 78.

Hobbies : Reading story books, painting, drawing.

Name : S. G. Adhithya

Age : 9

Address : 76/8, CPWD Quarters, Thirumangalam, Anna Nagar, Chennai - 600 040.

Name : Pratibha Thilak

Address : 46/17, Type VI, B.A.R.C. Colony, Tarapur. Boisar - 401 504. Thane.

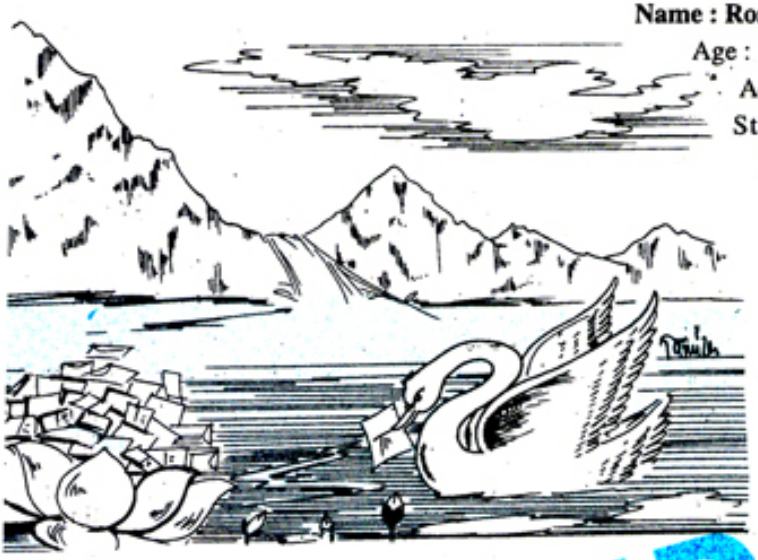
Hobbies : Writing poems, reading books, collecting stamps.

Name : K. Prathibha

Age : 13

Address : S-F-80, Dharapuram Road, Near Karthikeya Spinning Mills, Gandhinagar (Post), Udumalpet - 642 154.

Hobbies : Reading books, cycling, taking care of pets, needlework and drawing & painting.



Name : Roshni

Age : 12

Address : 60/5, Bajanai Koil Street, Choolaimedu, Chennai - 600 094.

Hobbies : Collecting stamps, coins, listening to music, reading books, surfing the net, tennis, basketball.

PENPALS

Hobbies : Reading Gokulam, cycling, computer games.

Name : Sumedha Narayanan

Age : 12

Address : R-201, 2nd Floor, Greater Kailash Part 1, New Delhi - 110 048.

Hobbies : Working on the computer, reading story books, painting.

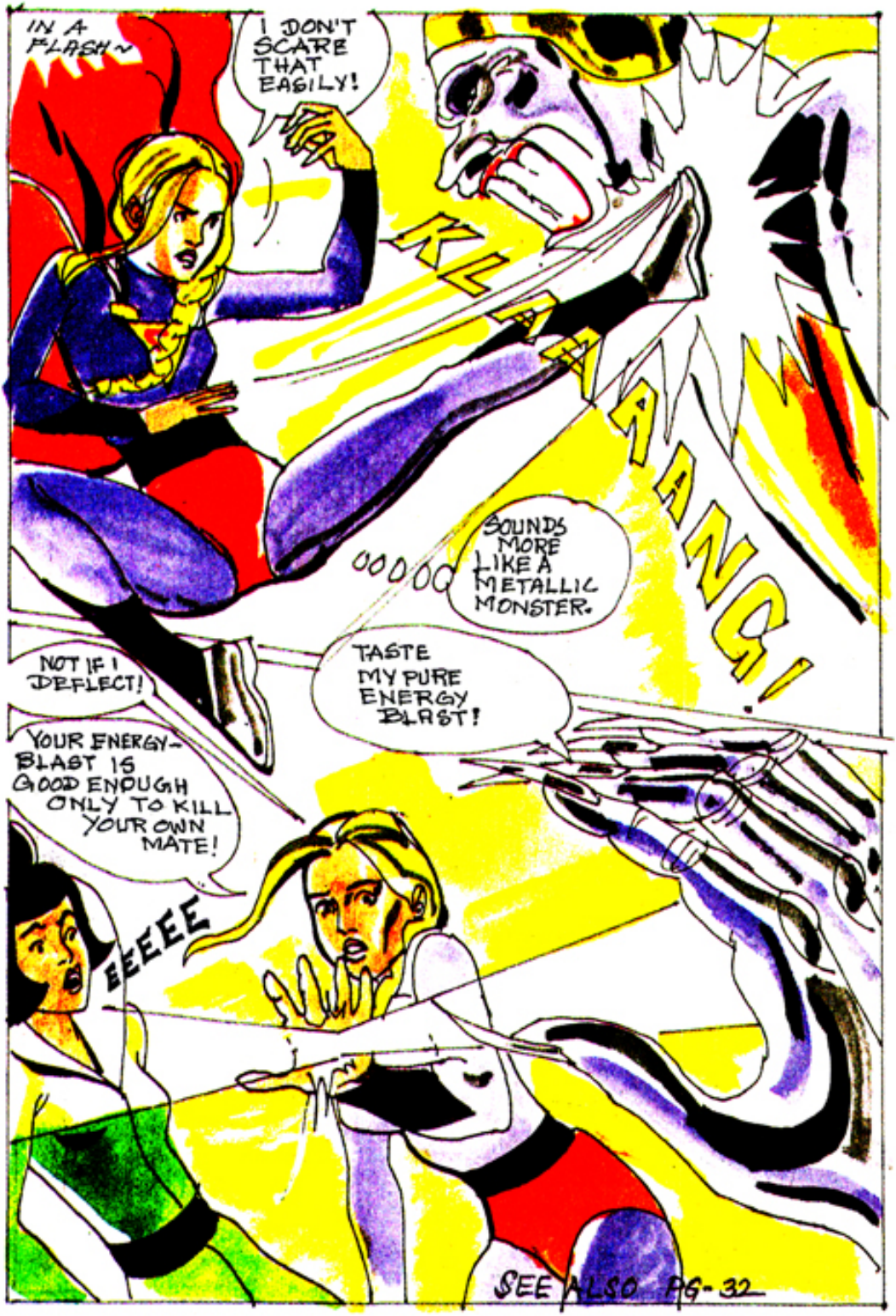
Name : M. Anju

Age : 11

Address : B-201, Premier Grihalakshmi Apts., Elango Nagar South, Virugambakkam, Chennai - 600 092.

Hobbies : Reading comics & mysteries, collection of foreign stamps, listening to music and gardening.

FANTASIA
STORY: J. DISNEY
ILLUSTRATIONS: JIMI
21
MEET OUR LEADER AND KISS YOURSELF GOOD BYE
YOU CALL THIS OVERGROWN INSECT YOUR LEADER?
INSECT, EH? WAIT TILL I CRUSH YOU OUT OF EXISTENCE.

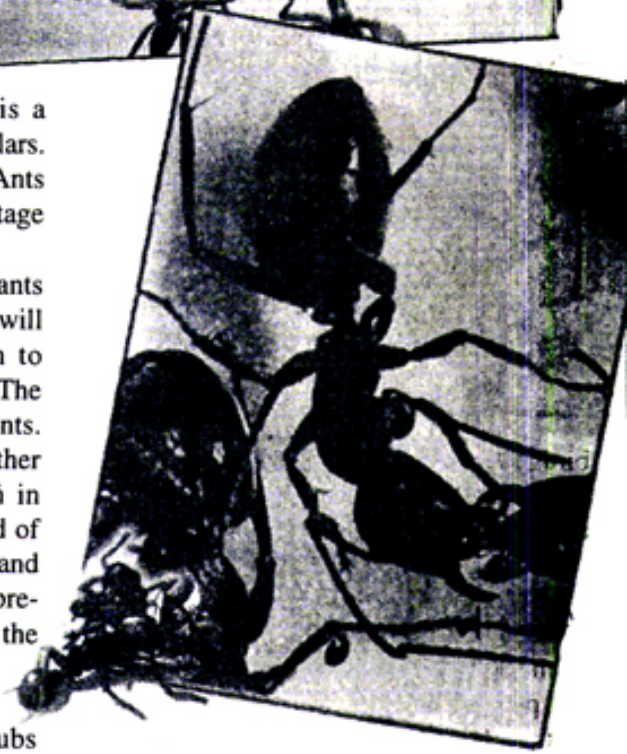

IN A FLASH~
I DON'T SCARE THAT EASILY!
KLAANG!
SOUNDS MORE LIKE A METALLIC MONSTER.
TASTE MY PURE ENERGY BLAST!
NOT IF I DEFLECT!
YOUR ENERGY-BLAST IS GOOD ENOUGH ONLY TO KILL YOUR OWN MATE!
EEEEE
SEE ALSO PG-32

Ants are known for their industriousness. Queen ants are known to live for 15 years while worker ants may live upto seven years. Ants are community creatures. They pass on food that strays into their territory to their waiting allies. If the ant's food - a larva or spider pretends to act dead, it serves no purpose for the poor being. The ants will swarm the creature. The spider or the larvae is then bitten and torn to pieces and carried home.

The ant's home - the ant hill is a labyrinth of chambers supported by pillars. There are nurseries for the babies. Ants group the nurseries according to the stage of development of the young ones.

The adults watch over the baby ants protecting them from predators. They will assist the baby ants through youth to maturity. They also bury the dead. The ants will not, however, tend the sick ants.

In the anthill, the queen is the mother of all ants. The eggs of ants hatch in summer. The grubs, as the new breed of ants are known, are legless, wingless and helpless creatures. The grubs are fed pre-digested food. They are carried out of the nurseries for airing and exercise.



After two or three weeks the grubs begin to spin silk around themselves. Like other insects during the cocoon stage the ants lie inert and don't eat.

It takes three weeks for the ant to emerge from the cocoon into a full-fledged ant.

Worker ants visit the cocoons. These ants will carry the cocoons to an outlet in the anthill so that the cocoons benefit from sunlight. When the ant is ready to emerge, the worker ants help the baby ant to emerge from its cocoon.

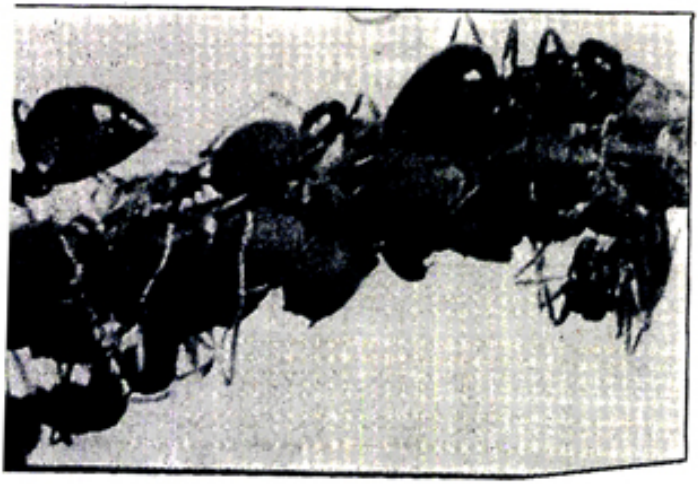
Even after the ant is out of the cocoon it is fed and nurtured by elders. The new

THE INDUSTRIOUS

ant joins the band after a fortnight or three weeks to hunt and forage for food.

The queen ants' only job is to lay eggs. The drones do little work. They cannot feed themselves and depend on other ants for food. They venture to other ant colonies in search of queen ants and never return.

Queen ants don't fall easy prey to birds and insects. In ant colonies they live in amity with the reigning queen ant or start a colony of their own.



Ants have 'camp followers'. Over 500 species of insects are known to inhabit ant nests. Some of them are parasites while others are pets. Ants are known to accommodate these pets because they spread odours pleasant to the sense of ants. Some insects yield sugary secretions. Some others are really pets. Ants feed them and guard them just like humans would their pets!

The aphides are green-flies that we find on the leaves of plants. They secrete a sticky substance called honey-dew. The ants make prisoners of these aphides. They leave them trapped in pens. These pens have approaches large enough for the body of the ant. The approaches are too small to allow the aphides to escape.

The worker ants provide a continuous supply of green leaves to the aphides. In turn the aphides secrete honey-dew. The ants have to merely touch the antennae of the aphides to secure honey-dew.

Aphides lay eggs during autumn. Worker ants collect these eggs from the leaves and bring them to ant nurseries. Here the aphide eggs hatch in the following spring. The worker ants carry the baby aphides to the food plant so that the aphides can grow in strength. The grown aphides are then captured and brought into the ant colonies.

About 8000 varieties of ants are known to man. The army ants found in Africa and the driver ants found in Colorado, California and N. Carolina in America can scare the wits out of both man and animal alike.

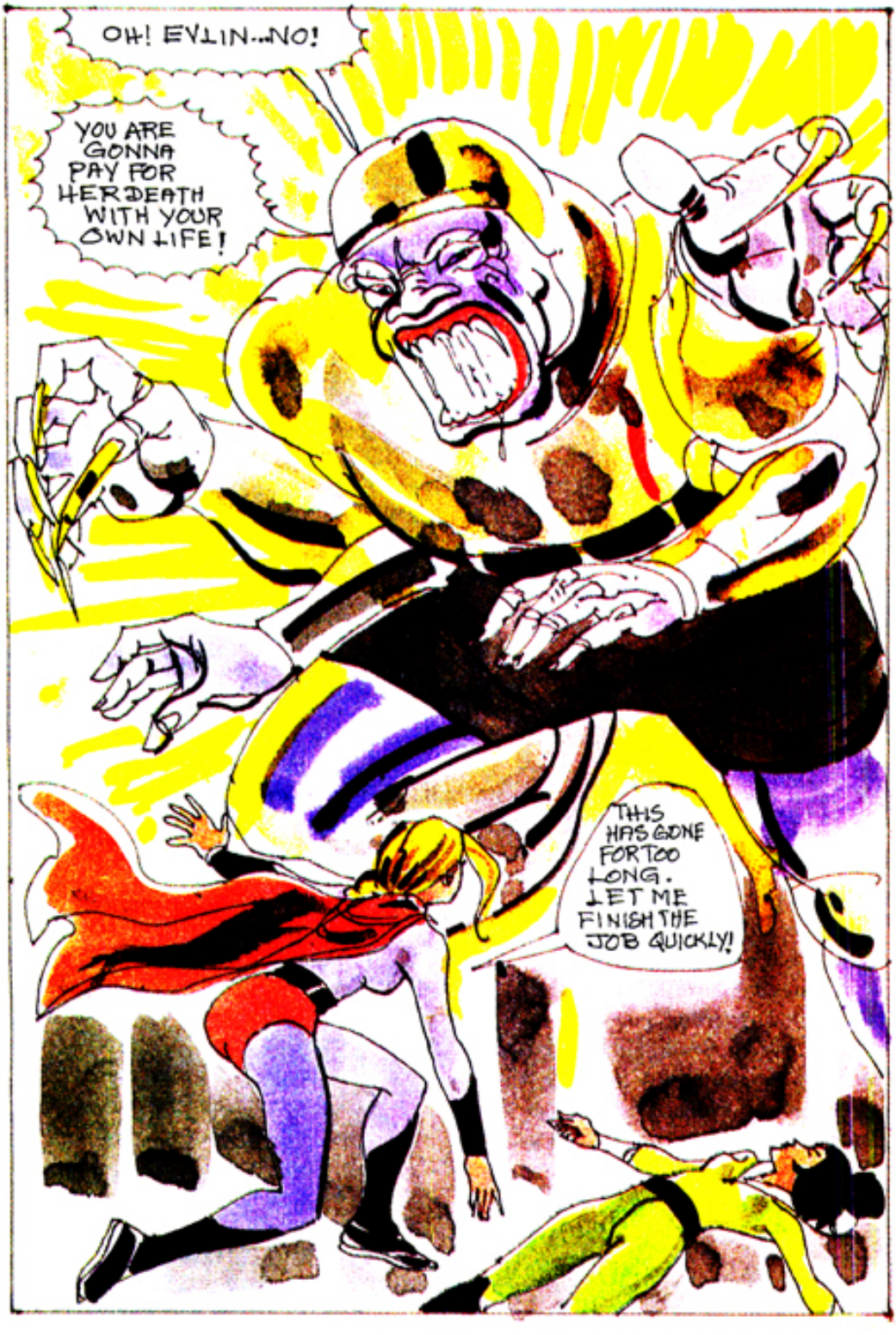
When these ants arrive as huge colonies people even vacate their home.

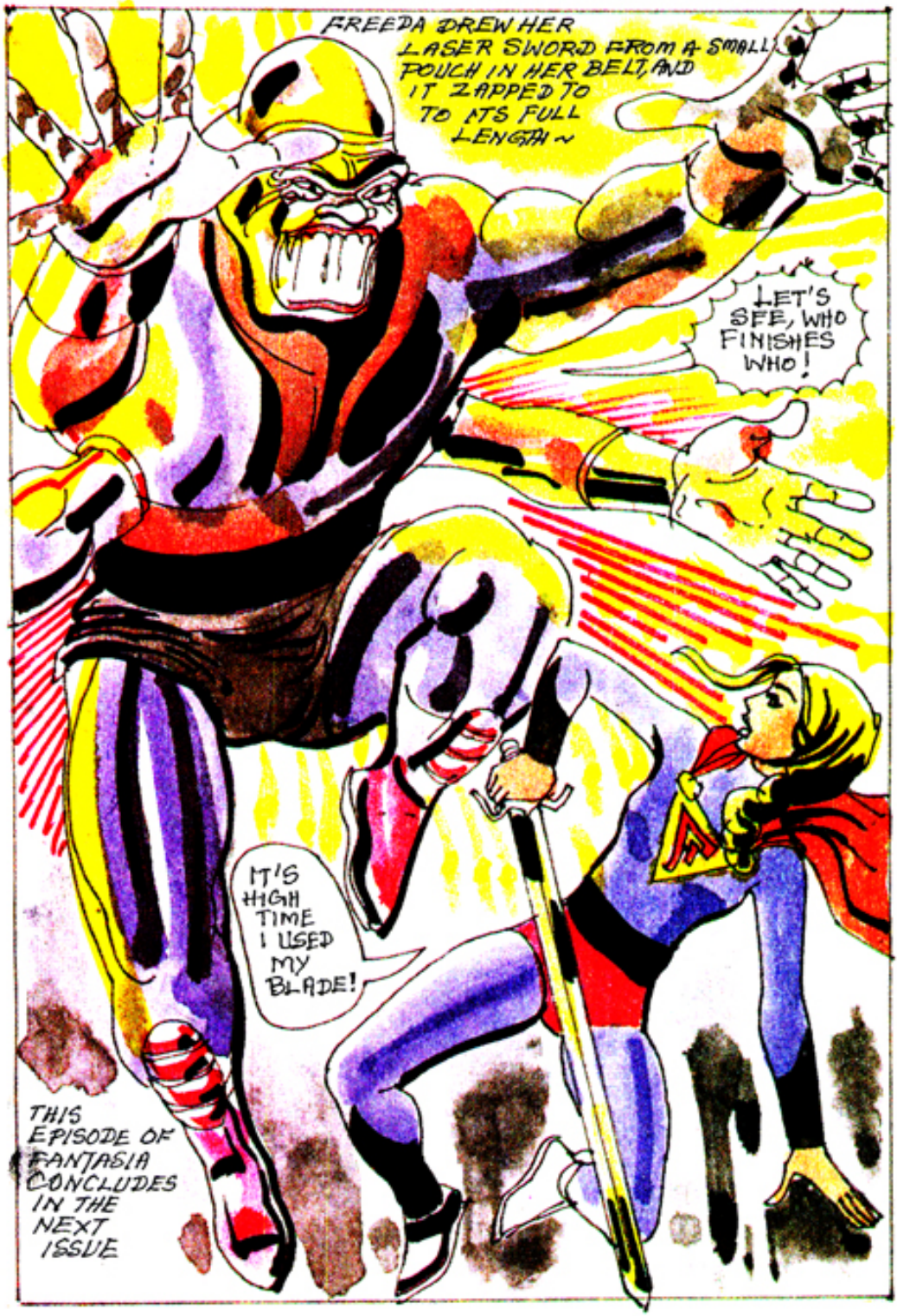
These ants then feed on cockroaches, lizards and any livestock that has been left behind. On return one can see only the bones!

These ants can make a meal of even a large snake. Ants have helped men. Man would raid anthills during famine in search of food!

Ants pass on messages to their friends when they encounter danger. They move away or wait till the danger has passed.

WORKER


OH! EVLIN...NO!
YOU ARE GONNA PAY FOR HER DEATH WITH YOUR OWN LIFE!
THIS HAS GONE FOR TOO LONG. LET ME FINISH THE JOB QUICKLY!


FREEDA DREW HER LASER SWORD FROM A SMALL POUCH IN HER BELT, AND IT ZAPPED TO TO ITS FULL LENGTH ~
LET'S SEE, WHO FINISHES WHO!
IT'S HIGH TIME I USED MY BLADE!
THIS EPISODE OF FANTASIA CONCLUDES IN THE NEXT ISSUE

KIRAN BEDI

Kiran is the second of the four daughters to her parents. She was born in June 1948 at Amritsar. Her family hails from Peshawar in Pakistan. Her great grandfather moved from Peshawar to Amritsar and set up a carpet manufacturing unit there.

With the partition of Pakistan the prosperous family business had to be shut down. Kiran and her sisters went to a christian missionary-run school. The school was run by Belgian nuns.

At Sacred Heart Convent School, Kiran took advantage of all the facilities the school offered. She played tennis, enrolled in NCC, participated in debates, dramatics and games.

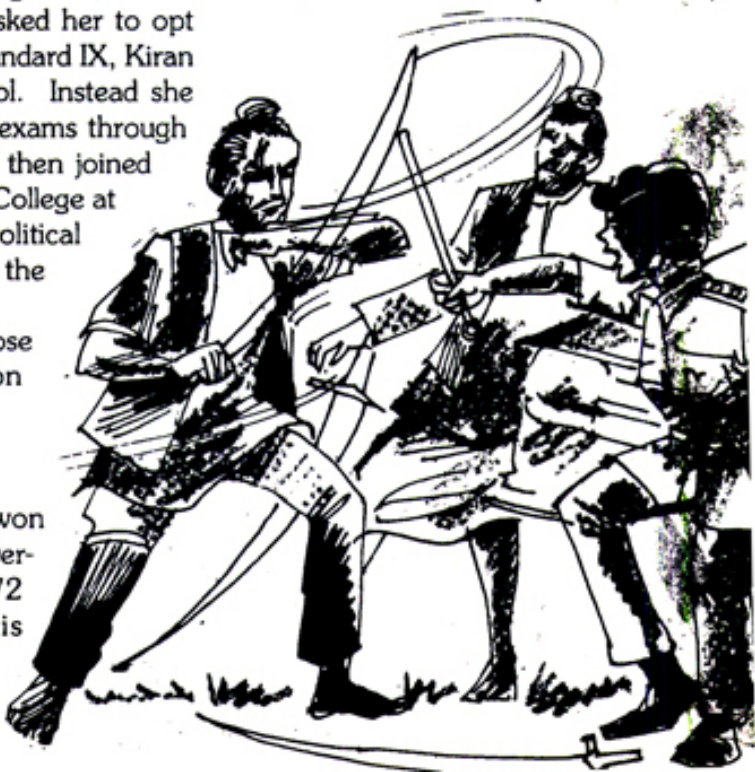
When the school asked her to opt for home science in standard IX, Kiran preferred to quit school. Instead she wrote the school final exams through a private school. She then joined the Government Girls College at Amritsar and chose political science in college for the master's degree.

In the NCC, she rose to become the platoon commander. At college Kiran participated in university level tennis and won laurels for Punjab university. She won the 1972 Asian Lawn Tennis Championship. Earlier, at 16, she won the national junior champion trophy. She was the national champion for three consequtive years.

She was married in 1972. The same year she passed the IAS exams and chose to become an IPS officer. She was the first woman police officer in India.

Kiran Bedi has generated much interest among Indian film makers. Quite a few films and TV serials depicting women police officers were inspired by her achievements. Kiran has also given a few suggestions on the subject.

As a conscientious police officer,



Kiran has had to face the wrath and criticism of many. The chaotic traffic of Delhi was the bane of road-users. Improperly parked vehicles would be towed away to the police station. The owner of the vehicle could retrieve his vehicle only after proper explanation to the police in-charge.

Once she was confronted by a group of religious activists. She was ghearoed by sword-wielding men. But she held fort until a police battalion arrived to control the situation.

Kiran Bedi is a deeply committed social worker too. She helped petty criminals to reform. Immediate justice was rendered and crimes were detected at source itself. This helped to reduce crime in the capital.

During her tenure at Narcoctics Control Board, she destroyed acres of charas and ganja plant cultivation. When she was offered the chance to serve at Mizoram, Kiran did not let the opportunity slip.

When Kiran Bedi took over as the IG of prisons at Tihar jail, people expected the jail to undergo many changes. At Tihar, Kiran was able to boost the confidence of prisoners and the jail staff. She helped the prisoners to rehabilitate themselves by learning skills. She brought about a change in the attitude of women prisoners.

Tihar jail, located in Delhi is the oldest jail in India. It houses 8,500 prisoners.

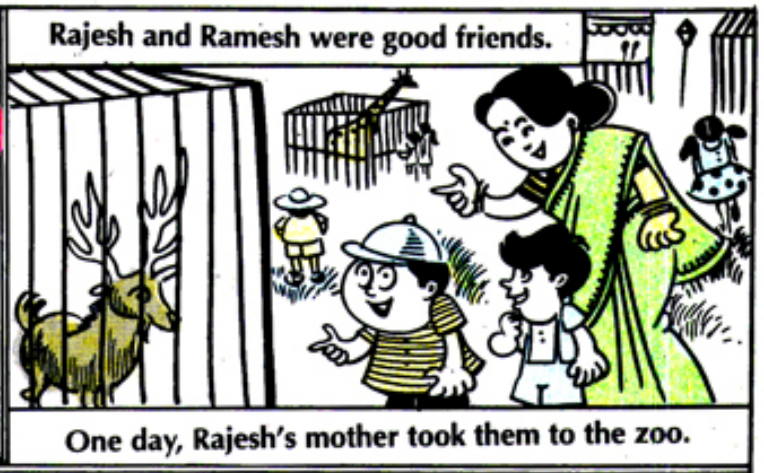
Kiran Bedi has now been entrusted with the task of taking the police force into the 21st century. Despite many political and other pressures, Kiran Bedi has made her country proud. Her prison-reform movement made her well-known world over. She has a devoted fan-following among women and aspiring police officers.

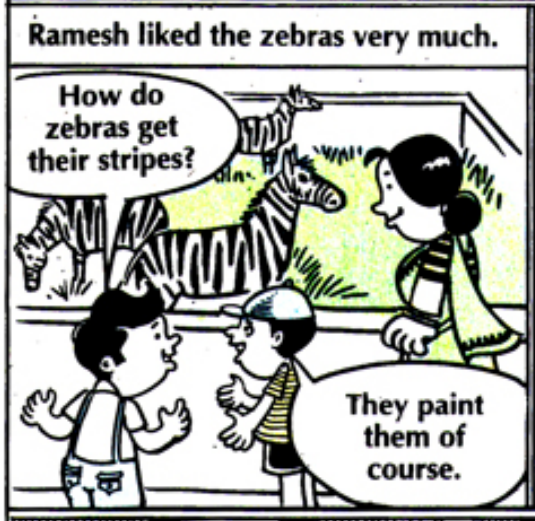
Kiran Bedi was awarded the Ramon Magsaysay for excellence in government service in 1995. Special mention was made of her efforts to reform those involved in the brewing of illicit liquor. She helped those detained for this crime to establish decent businesses of their own and earn a living.

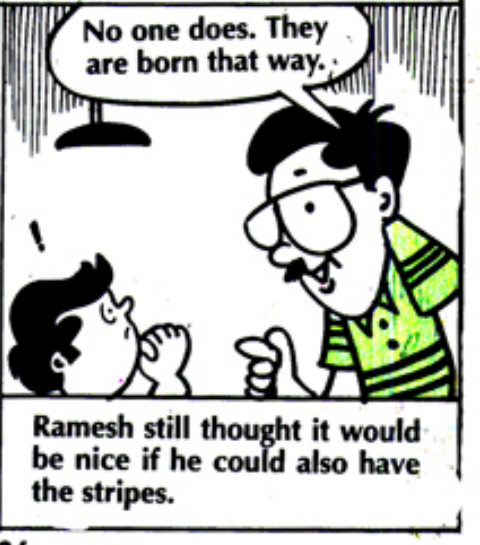
Kiran Bedi was awarded the Jawaharlal Nehru national integration medal in 1980. In 1979, she won the police medal for bravery.

ZEBRA STRIPES

Story :
Tanmayi Gummaraju,
age 10, The Netherlands
Illustration : MAHESH







That night a fairy appeared before Ramesh.

Your wish is granted.

Thank you, I am so happy.

The fairy flew with Ramesh to the jungle.

See the result of your wish.

Horses, donkeys, deers, giraffees all have stripes. They all look alike.

Even monkeys and bears!

There's no variety. Please make us all the way we were before.

There's a purpose in all of God's creations.

In the morning —

Papa, I think only zebras and tigers should have stripes.

Why this sudden change of heart?

But Ramesh wouldn't give away his secret.

TRUE FRIENDS

Vilas, Praveen and Shekar were close friends since their kindergarten days. They went to the same school and lived close to each other. Their fathers worked in the same company.

That year, Praveen and Shekar were sent to a different section. A new boy joined school. His name was Anoop. Anoop had arrived from Madras and was admitted to the same section as Vilas.

Vilas always stood first in class. One day Vilas fell ill. He couldn't attend school for almost two months. In the unit test held that month Anoop stood first. When Vilas returned to school, he sought out Anoop. Anoop pretended to be a good friend of Vilas. Anoop suggested that Vilas could meet him in the school library everyday and he would help him take down notes.

Vilas was still recuperating. The trip upstairs to the library

Policeman : Have you seen a man with a big briefcase?

Raju : No.

Policeman : Did he tell you to say that?

Raju : Yes.

and back to class tired him very much. He couldn't study much.

A wise friend called Karan noticed this. He offered to copy down the notes and asked Anoop not to take advantage of innocent students.

Only when Karan pointed out to him how shabbily Vilas had been treated did Vilas realise what kind of a boy Anoop was.

Vilas began concentrating on his studies. Since the illness had been severe, his parents would not allow him to stay up late or wake up early in the morning.

Still, Vilas utilised all the time he could get to study. When the X standard results were declared, Vilas had stood first with 92 percent. He thanked his friends for all their help. Karan stood second.

Vishnavi Srinivasan,
age 10,
Holy Child SSS,
N. Delhi.

Customer : Waiter, there's a small fly in my salad.

Waiter : I'm sorry, sir, I'll go and get you a bigger one.

Nagabhushan, N.,
Bangalore.

RULES

1 - Throw six to start

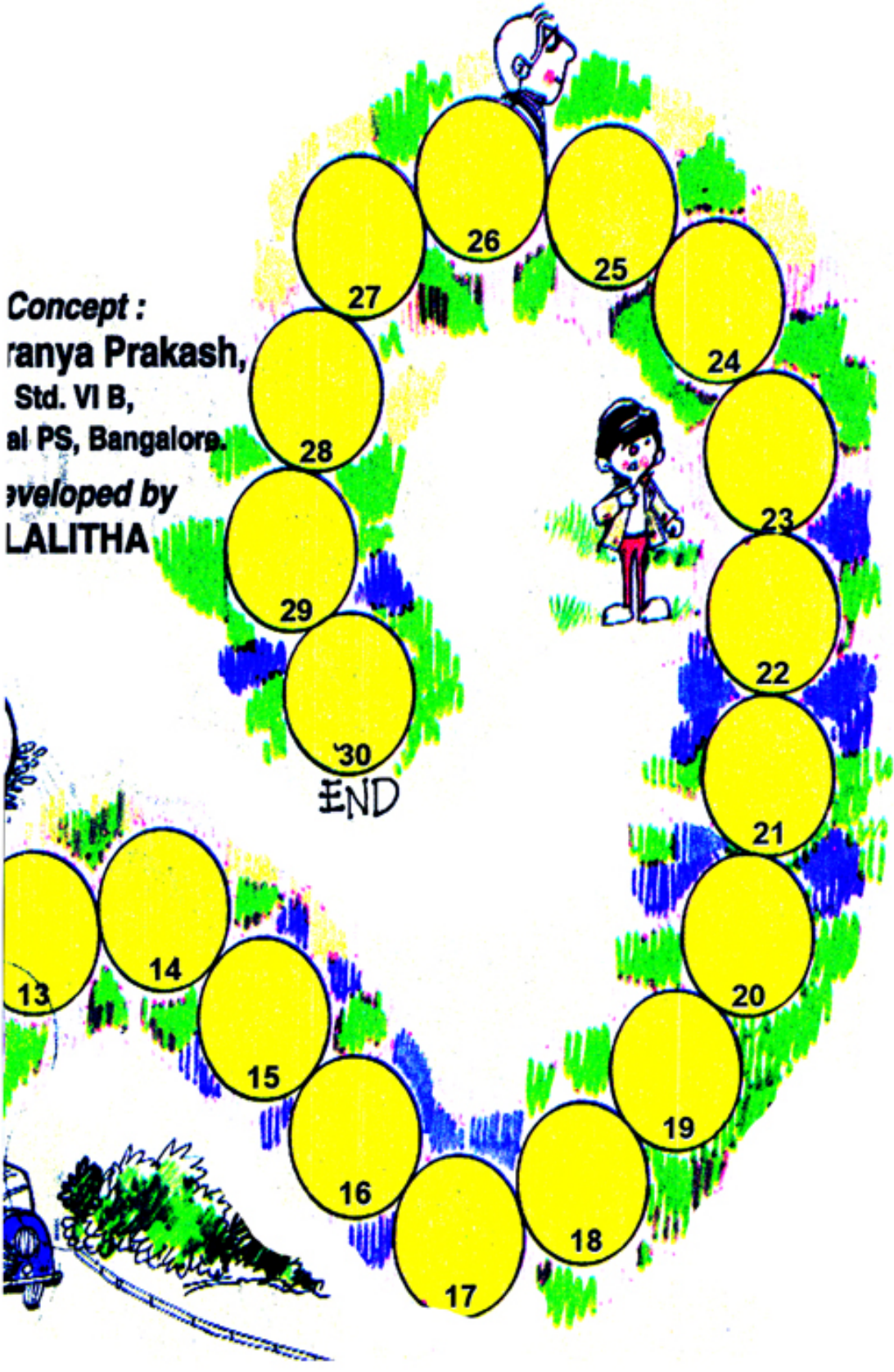
4 - Won a lottery go to seven

9 - You inhale carbon dust. Miss two turns as you are in the hospital

11 - Your new car helps you zoom to 15

22 - Stranded. You are ill too. Miss a turn

26 - You have hit the jackpot! If you get six here, you can take it home!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END

THE ECO-FRIENDLY FAMILY

Sharan and Nandhitha stared at each other in dismay. The backyard of their seaside cottage was a huge mess. Someone had conveniently used it as a garbage dump. The Kumars spent the summer at this cottage. Mr. Kumar had been born here.

Torn pages of magazines fluttered around. Empty coke cans lay half embedded in the rubbish. Pink and green polythene bags were caught in the bushes.

"Never mind, children" said Mr. Kumar finally. "We can't immediately find-out who did this. But let's try and clean the place up."

Twelve year old Nandhitha wrinkled her nose in disgust. "Why should our holiday be spoiled because some stupid people can't take care of their own garbage?" she asked.

"Now Nandhitha if we can clean this up by noon we'll go and have your favourite ghee-roast and mint chutney at the seaside cafe" said her father.

"It's a deal!" shouted Sharan.

Nandhitha changed into an old skirt and comfortable T-shirt while Sharan discarded his sandals for a pair of rubber chappals. Their mother brought out a large card-board box and placed it in a corner of the garden. Mr. Kumar said, "Collect all the plastic bottles and covers you can find

and put them into the box". Sharan was quite happy. "I'm glad I didn't have to pick those dirty vegetable peels." "Don't worry," added Mrs. Kumar, "Once your father digs a shallow pit we can sweep up this trash and bury it".

Within an hour the garden was tidy. "Why aren't you burying these plastic things?" asked Nandhi-

tha. "We have to take them to the common dump" replied Mr. Kumar. "They are non-biodegradable."

"Non-biodegradable?" asked Sharan. "What's that?"

His father smiled. "It means that unlike vegetable wastes, plastics will not decompose in the soil for many years."

"But what's wrong with that? Well son, imagine the whole world cluttered with plastic. Land would simply be choked. It can even make our food toxic."

"All this talk has made me hungry" said Nandhitha, "Let's go for lunch."

The children washed their hands and feet with antiseptic soap and set out to the little restaurant.

On their way back Mrs. Kumar stopped by a grocery shop. "Half a kilo of beans and another of carrots, please" Mrs. Kumar told the storekeeper. The old man began to put the vegetables in polythene bags. "We've brought our own shopping bag" she said. "Never use plastic unnecessarily," she advised the children.

Sharan suddenly spied some chocolate wafers. "Oooh! Can I buy those please?" he asked. Mr. Kumar looked at the chocolate which Sharan was pointing to and gently said, "Can you choose something else? That is excessively wrapped in plastic." So Sharan settled for a Fruit 'n' Nut milk-chocolate.

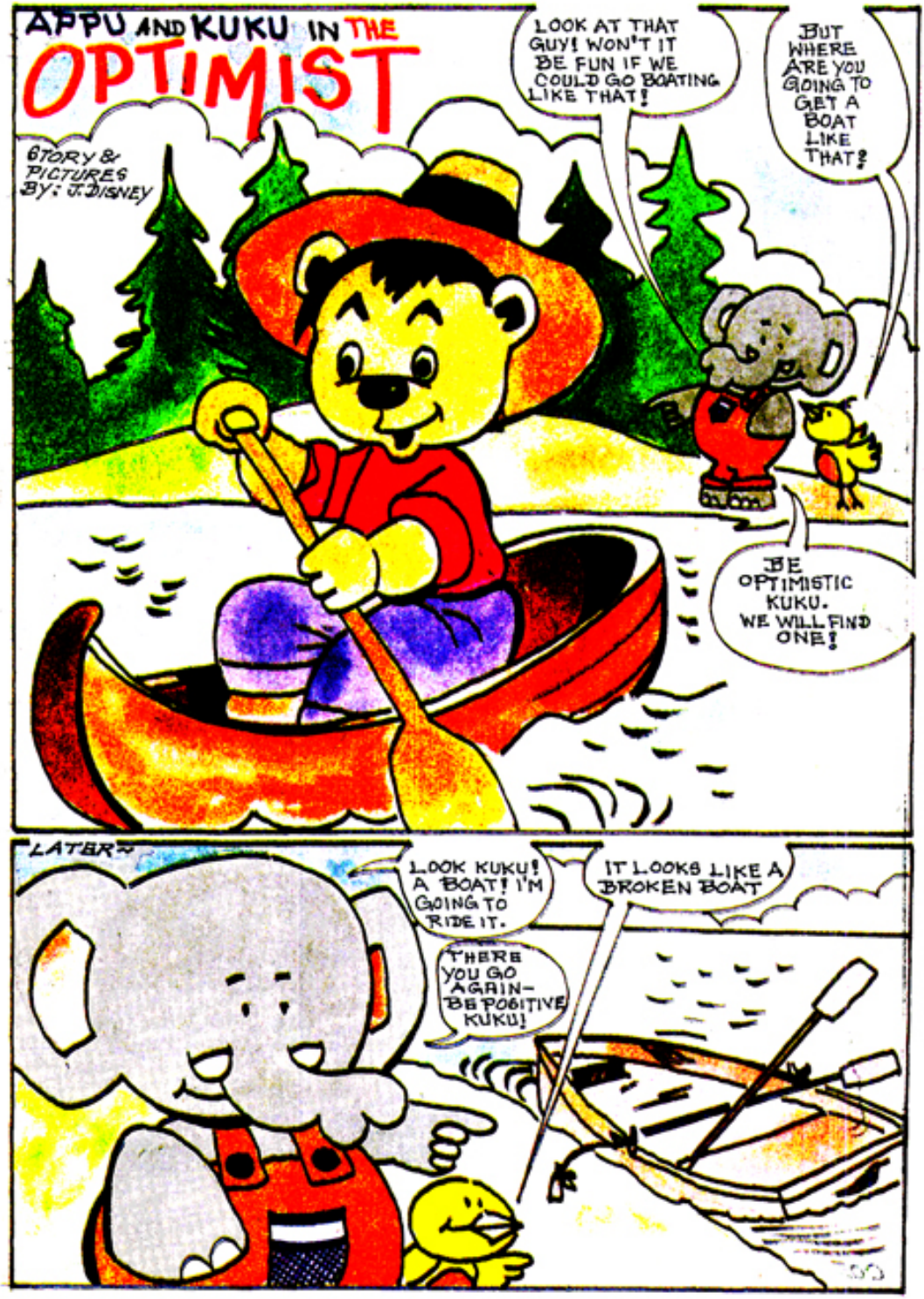
"I noticed you were trying not to use too much plastic." Nandhitha had been observing her parents, "What can I do to help?"

"May be you could make it a point to use a fountain pen whenever possible because they can easily be filled with ink. Plastic refills have to be just thrown away" said Mother.

"That's a great idea!" exclaimed Nandhitha. "I'm going to work on 'Plastics' for my project this term." "Remember that some plastics like milk-packets and old bottles can be recycled" added mother. Nandhitha made a note of it in a little book that she carried with her all the time.

A lanky youth selling tender-coconuts passed them by. Mr. Kumar bought one for each of them. Everybody had a good laugh when suddenly Sharan lifted his coconut and said, "Nature's best, in the most eco-friendly container. Cheers!"

Kannal Achuthan,
Tuticorin.


APPU AND KUKU IN THE
OPTIMIST
STORY & PICTURES BY: J. DISNEY
LOOK AT THAT GUY! WON'T IT BE FUN IF WE COULD GO BOATING LIKE THAT!
BUT WHERE ARE YOU GOING TO GET A BOAT LIKE THAT?
BE OPTIMISTIC KUKU. WE WILL FIND ONE!
LATER...
LOOK KUKU! A BOAT! I'M GOING TO RIDE IT.
IT LOOKS LIKE A BROKEN BOAT
THERE YOU GO AGAIN- BE POSITIVE KUKU!

YOU SAID IT IS BROKEN. BUT IT IS NOT! IT EVEN HAS A FOUNTAIN!

NO, YOU DUMMY, THE BOAT HAS SPRUNG A LEAK

LEAK?.. WHAT LEAK?

YOU DUMB OPTIMIST– NOW DO YOU AGREE WITH ME?

NO!

WHAT DO YOU MEAN, 'NO'?

BE POSITIVE KUKU. IT MIGHT NOT BE A GOOD BOAT. BUT IT IS THE BEST BATH-TUB I'VE EVER HAD!

WILL YOU EVER AGREE, YOU WERE WRONG?

POSITIVELY NO!

COLOUR THIS BATHING SCENE!

SMILE PLEASE!

Judge : When you saw that both the culprits were fighting with iron rods, why didn't you stop them?

Witness : There was no spare iron rod.

Suman Nandi, age 14,
Kharagpur .

Office Manager : *How can you divide an apple among five men?*

Worker : *Make apple juice and divide in five glass.*

Goutham Srinivas, age 16,
Bangalore.

Customer : I want a paper dosa.

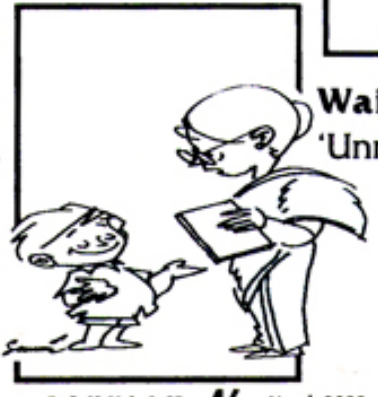
Mother : What did you learn in school today?

Son : My teacher taught us to write.

Mother : What did you write?

Son : I don't know. She hasn't taught us to read yet.

M. Rajesh Jain,
Chennai.



Waiter : 'Ruled 'Unruled'?

O.S. Rajamouli,
Neyveli.

GLORY FOREVER

"Hai, Morning glory, a very good morning to you." Young Gautham wished me as he ran to meet Mani thatha. Gautham and Mani thatha were discussing what nutrients should be given to the flowering plants.

Mani thatha has a green thumb. He has a soft corner for creepers. He adores the African tulip which he planted long, long ago. I came to this garden only a few years ago.

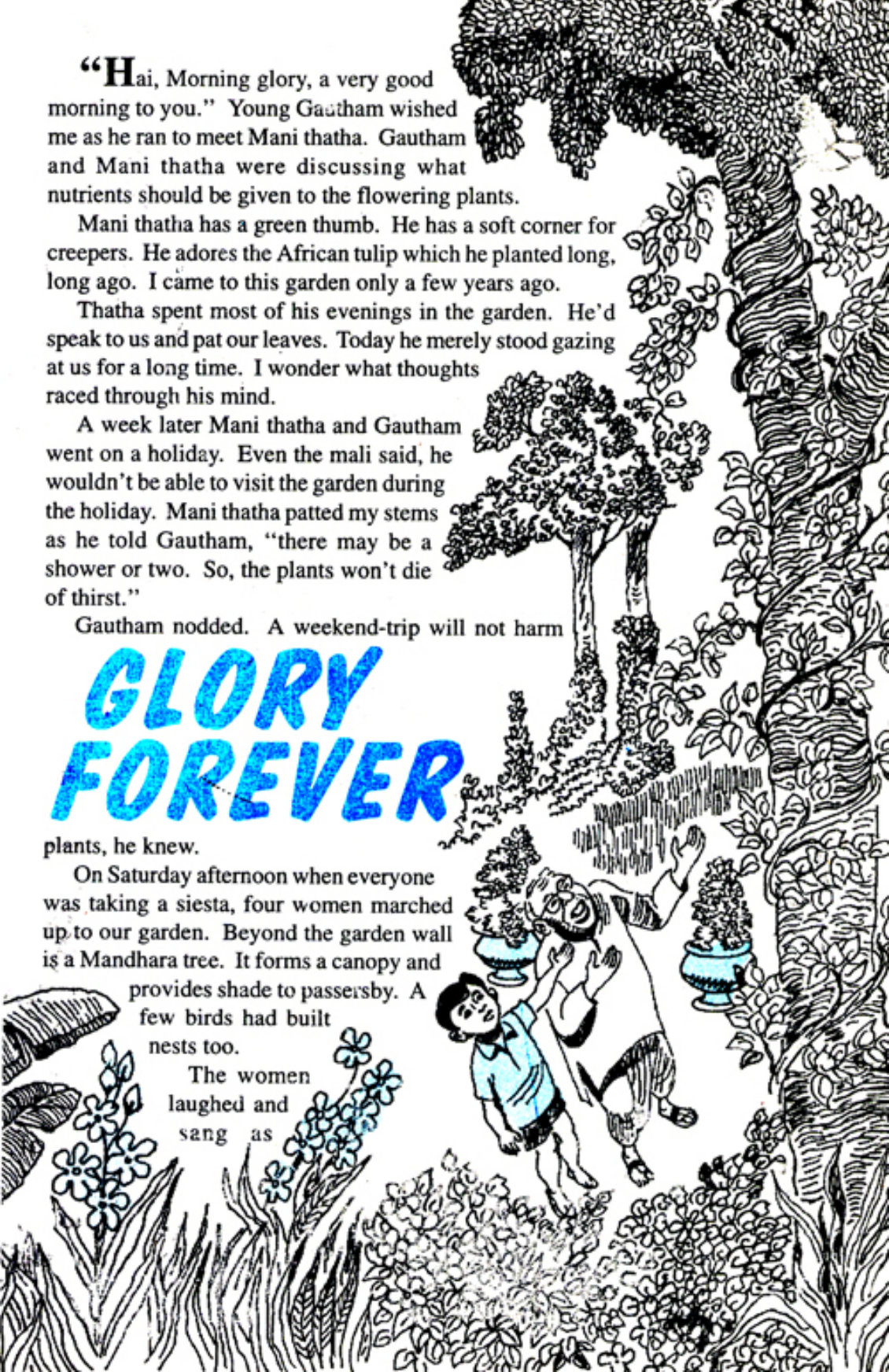
Thatha spent most of his evenings in the garden. He'd speak to us and pat our leaves. Today he merely stood gazing at us for a long time. I wonder what thoughts raced through his mind.

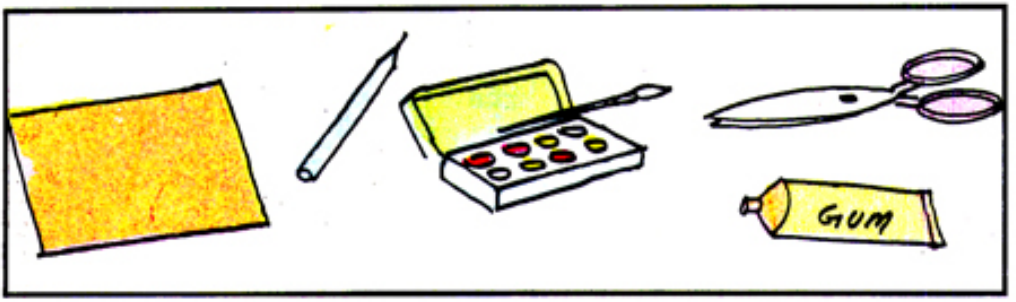
A week later Mani thatha and Gautham went on a holiday. Even the mali said, he wouldn't be able to visit the garden during the holiday. Mani thatha patted my stems as he told Gautham, "there may be a shower or two. So, the plants won't die of thirst."

Gautham nodded. A weekend-trip will not harm plants, he knew.

On Saturday afternoon when everyone was taking a siesta, four women marched up to our garden. Beyond the garden wall is a Mandhara tree. It forms a canopy and provides shade to passersby. A few birds had built nests too.

The women laughed and sang as





CREATIVE CORNER

You need :

Thick chart paper, pencil, paints of various colours, scissors.

Method :

1. Fold the paper in the middle.
2. Draw a clown on one half of the sheet (see picture).
3. Paint the clown.
4. Cut out the edges.
5. Write an amusing one-liner in the second half sheet.
6. Paste the clown's finger to the glass. Serve lemonade.

Your friend can take home this inexpensive memento.

J. Kavya, Std. IXC,
St. Joseph of Cluny MHSS,
Neyveli.

---

they axed branches. A few dry twigs fell into the compound. One fell right on top of the African tulip. Then suddenly a huge branch fell on us crushing us under its weight.

Then a miracle happened. Reshma who lives in the building opposite Mani thatha's house ran up to the gate and shouted, "What are you doing?" "We are felling branches, little girl," said one of the women.

"Stop it immediately." But the women only laughed. Reshma's loud voice brought her mother to the gate. A few neighbourhood children also came up. They encircled tree and began shouting at the women.

The shocked women had to leave the place. The children then entered Mani thatha's house and gathered the broken branches and twigs. They stacked it up in a corner in the garden.

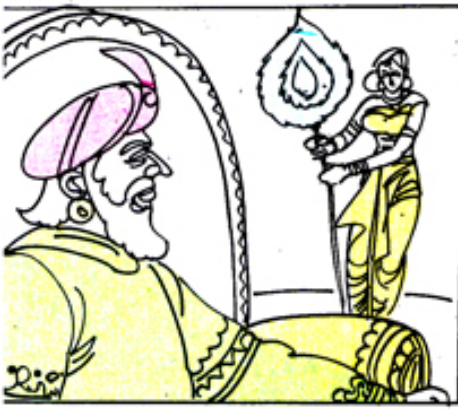
But for Reshma and the nature-loving children Mani thatha would have lost me and the African tulips to unknown wood cutters!

Girija Karthikeyan,
Bangalore.

ORDEAL TO ROYALTY

STORY :
Somenath Ghosh, Age 16,
Netaji Nagar College, Calcutta.
Illustration : **SASI**

King Samrat ruled the kingdom of Haripur ably.



However, he was becoming old. He wanted to appoint a successor. The king called his three sons to him. He wondered who would be able to rule his kingdom well, after his death.

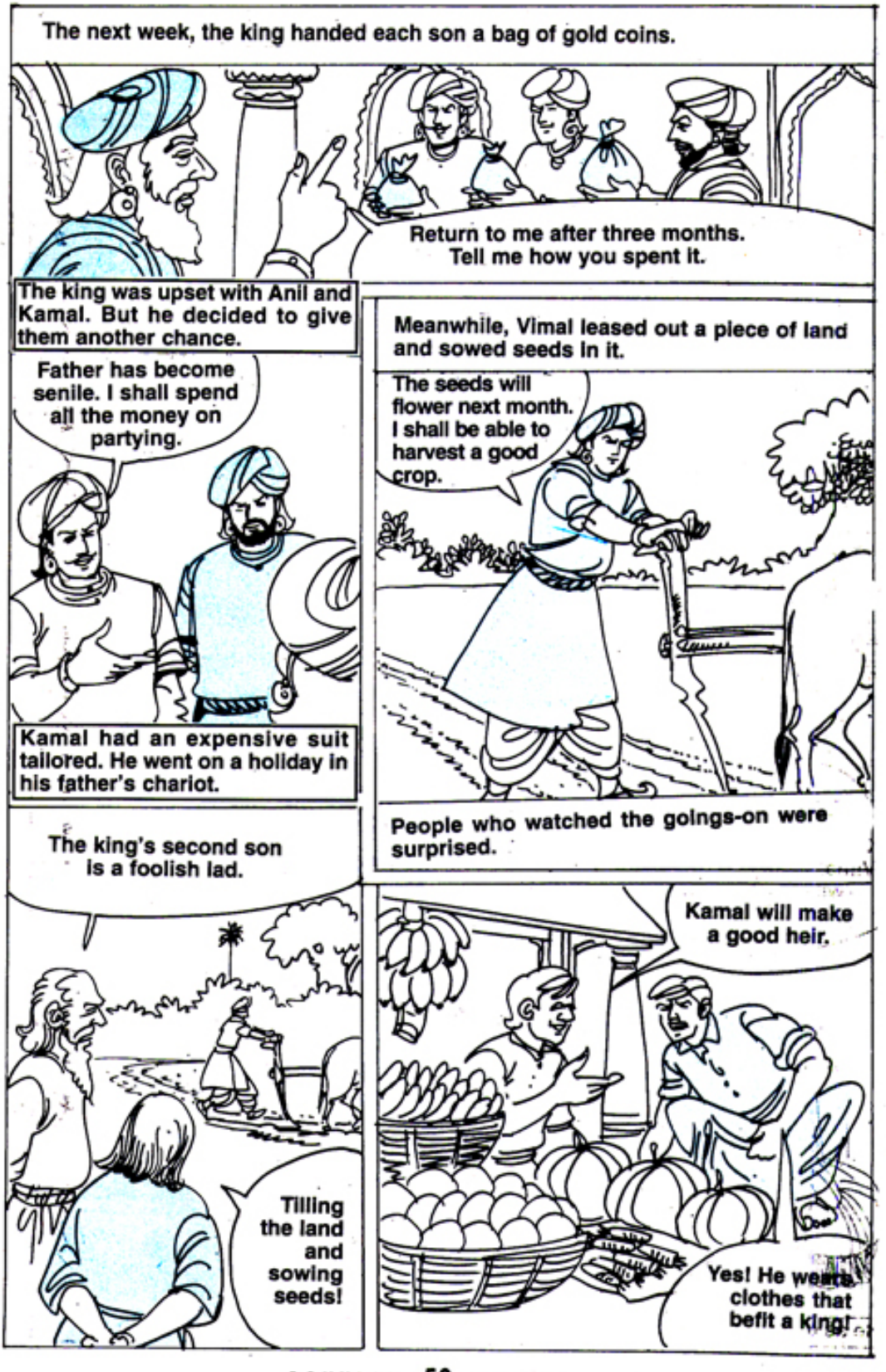
Anil enjoyed himself with his friends. He borrowed money from his friends at the end of the week.

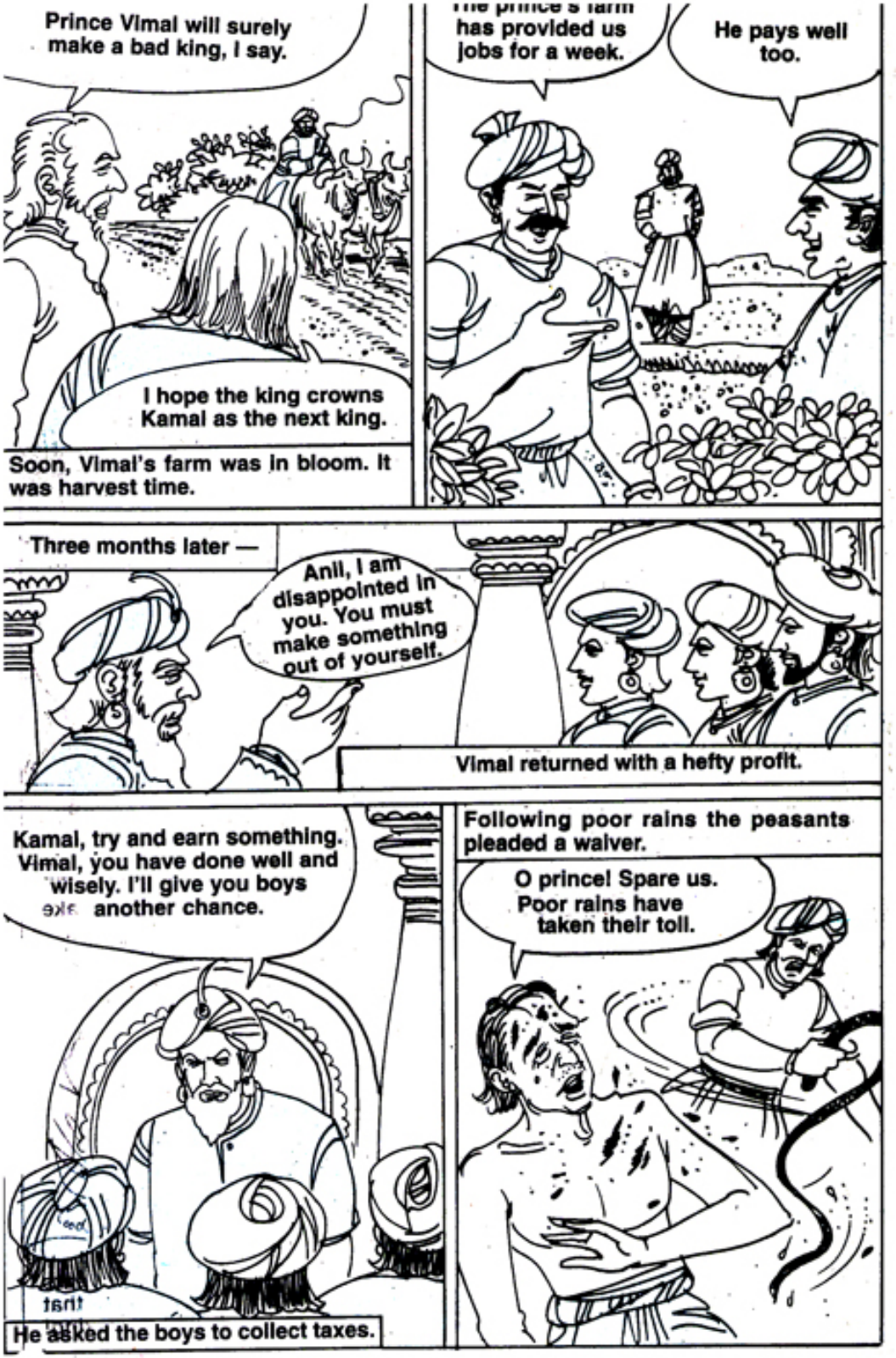
Anil lazed and spent a large amount of the borrowed money on merry-making.

Vimal disguised himself as a porter and reached the market-place.

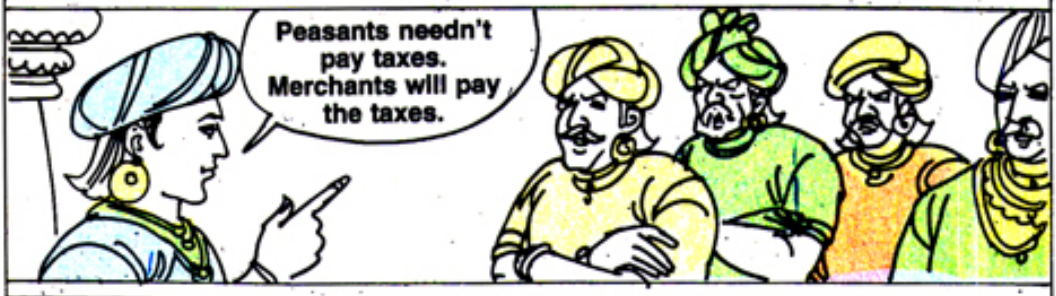
Kamal approached his mother with a request for money.

Meanwhile, the king had his sons watched.


The next week, the king handed each son a bag of gold coins.
Return to me after three months. Tell me how you spent it.
The king was upset with Anil and Kamal. But he decided to give them another chance.
Father has become senile. I shall spend all the money on partying.
Kamal had an expensive suit tailored. He went on a holiday in his father's chariot.
Meanwhile, Vimal leased out a piece of land and sowed seeds in it.
The seeds will flower next month. I shall be able to harvest a good crop.
People who watched the goings-on were surprised.
The king's second son is a foolish lad.
Tilling the land and sowing seeds!
Kamal will make a good heir.
Yes! He wears clothes that befit a king!


Prince Vimal will surely make a bad king, I say.
I hope the king crowns Kamal as the next king.
Soon, Vimal's farm was in bloom. It was harvest time.
The prince's farm has provided us jobs for a week.
He pays well too.
Three months later —
Anil, I am disappointed in you. You must make something out of yourself.
Vimal returned with a hefty profit.
Kamal, try and earn something. Vimal, you have done well and wisely. I'll give you boys another chance.
He asked the boys to collect taxes.
Following poor rains the peasants pleaded a waiver.
O prince! Spare us. Poor rains have taken their toll.

Prince Anil would not listen. He collected taxes forcibly. Prince Vimal collected tax from the merchant class and waived the tax of the poor peasants.



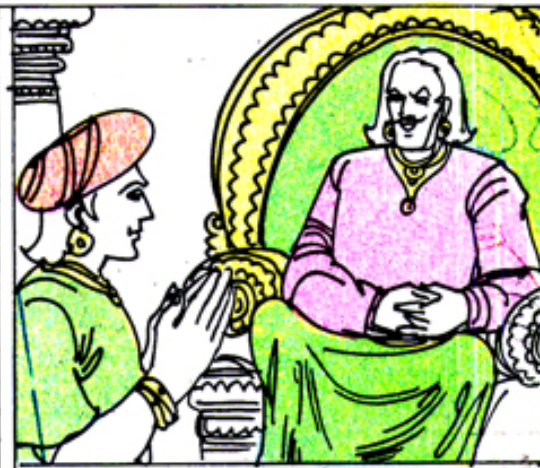
The harassed people took their complaints to the king.

Your majesty, princes Anil and Kamal are forcibly collecting taxes.

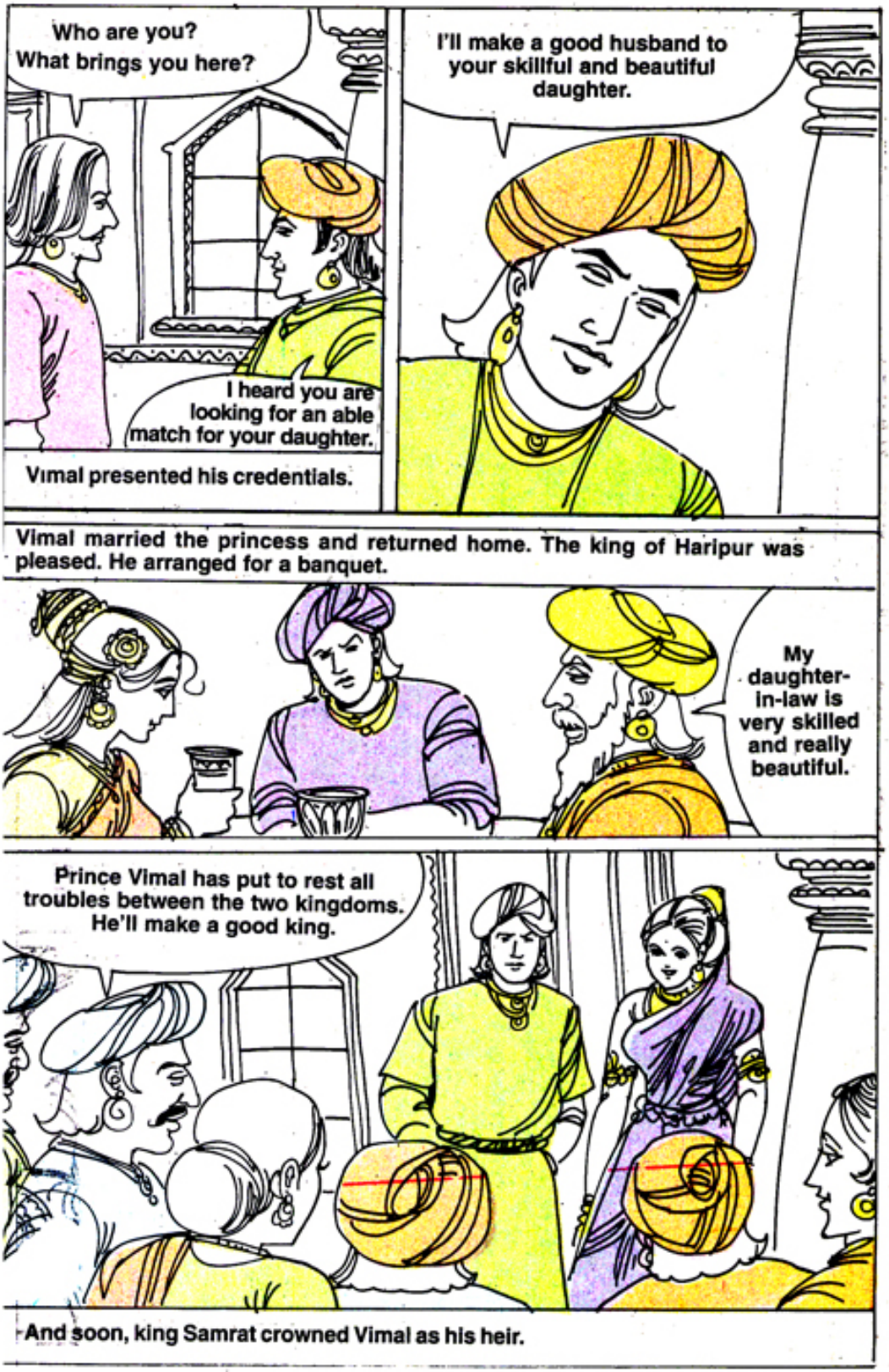
The angered king realised that Anil and Kamal were no good.

But the king was wary. The king of Samantapur was up in arms. King Samrat called his sons.

This shocked the king. He banished Anil and Kamal from his kingdom.



Meanwhile, Vimal set out to the kingdom of Samantapur.


Who are you? What brings you here?
I'll make a good husband to your skillful and beautiful daughter.
I heard you are looking for an able match for your daughter.
Vimal presented his credentials.
Vimal married the princess and returned home. The king of Haripur was pleased. He arranged for a banquet.
My daughter-in-law is very skilled and really beautiful.
Prince Vimal has put to rest all troubles between the two kingdoms. He'll make a good king.
And soon, king Samrat crowned Vimal as his heir.

FRIGHTENED

"Do you believe in ghosts?" I asked Neeraj.

"I haven't seen one. I think they do exist."

"What about you, Sanju?"

"I too believe in them."

"Don't be stupid. If you haven't seen one, how can you believe it exists?" I wanted to know.

I don't believe in ghosts.

I love adventures. Neeru and Sanju are my best friends, despite our differences in opinions.

"Hey Trimurti, what are you talking about?" Our class bully, Abishekh, approached us. We had nicknamed him Gunda.

"Nothing serious.... er.... just about..."

Sanju was always afraid of the bully. Often Sanju was bullied.

Gunda said, "Learn to speak properly, you coward rat."

We watched him go. I then turned to Sanju and said, "Hey, Sanju, why don't you give him a punch when he taunts you?"

"So that he can give three punches back?" Neeru countered.

"You must put an end to this. He must be taught a lesson," I said.

"But what can we do?"

"I have an idea...."

That night after the warden had switched off all the lights, we tiptoed out of the hostel. We were armed with a bottle of red ink, a black and a white shawl.

"Has Goofie seen us?" I asked. Goofie was the name we had given Mr. Gopinath, the warden.

"No."

"Hey you, shall I go back?" Sanju asked tremulously.

"Shut up and be quiet," I ordered. After all, this plan was mine and how could I let him go?

"Now listen to me. I will cover myself

BULLY

with the white shawl. Sanju, start the tape as soon as Neeru walks down the driveway. You remain here, Neeru. When I signal, you must cover yourself with that black shawl and walk with the lit candle. I will teach that Gunda the meaning of fear."

I draped the shawl over my head. I climbed to the first floor, using the drainage pipe. Sanju had switched off the main and the entire hostel was cloaked in darkness. It was a cold December night. Nobody dared to venture out though the power supply had been cut.

I could see the corridor in the moonlight. I made my way through the corridor and halted before the second room near the staircase.

I spilled the red ink just outside the door and knocked on the door.

"Who's that?" Abishekh's voice trembled.

"It's me, open the door," I answered in a harsh voice.

I tiptoed to the balcony and climbed to the ground using the pipe.

I joined Sanju and Neeru who were curious to know what had happened. I told them. I then went to the rear of the building, climbed up on the small extension on the wall, gripping the drain pipe there for support. From here, I could clearly look into the bully's room.

He was wide awake now. He walked to the door. His voice trembled as he asked again, "Who's there?"

I wanted to laugh.

Yesterday our warden had given each of us a candle and a box of matches to use during power failure. The bully had refused and scoffed at the idea. "Now go and open the door, you he-man," I muttered under my breath.

He opened the door and said, "Ooh, what's this?"

He peered at the liquid. He backed away in fear. He quickly marched into the room and shut the door. He didn't call anybody for help. How could a bully admit to fear?

As he leaned on the door, eyes shut, I shouted, "Ha, ha, ha...."

Before he could open his eyes, I jumped on to the sunshade and flailed my arms from inside the shawl. The bully was too shocked to utter anything when he saw the picture I made. He opened his mouth and then clamped it shut. He just couldn't bring himself to scream. His prestige as a bully of the school was at stake.

I swung down from the sunshade

CUSTARD FRUIT MIX

Ingredients :

Seasonal cut fruits
Cherries
Custard powder - 1 heaped tbs.
Sugar - 2 heaped tbs.
Milk - 500 ml

Method :

Measure 20 gms of custard powder into a bowl. Then add ¼ cup milk from 500 ml to make a smooth paste. Boil the remaining milk with two heaped table spoons sugar. Remove from heat, add the paste and cook again for two to three minutes, stirring continuously.

Remove from heat and bring to room temperature. Then add the cut fruits to this mixture. Chill it in refridgerator for 15 minutes and serve with cherries.

G.J. Roopmathi, age 13, St. Gregorias School, N. Delhi.

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before he could peer over the window and hid myself in the bushes.

I signalled to Neeru. I could hear the bully ask, "Who's there?"

Neeru was cloaked in the black shawl. He held aloft the lit candle and walked down the shaded driveway. It appeared as if a lit candle was moving by itself. Sanju switched on the tape recorder. Eerie noises and strange sounds filled the silence of the night. I saw the bully watch the entire scene, looking terrified.

With a scream, the bully fainted. Everybody, including the three of us ran to his room. Goofie sprinkled water on the bully. He finally regained consciousness and narrated to Goofie all that he had seen. Goofie walked upto the door of the bully's room and looked. He said, "It is only red ink. He looked at the boys and asked sternly, "So who was playing the prank?"

We owned up. We told him how the bully always picked on Sanju. Goofie was not impressed. Instead he said, "You three are suspended from school for three days. You cannot go out of the hostel either. Next time anybody behaves the way Abishekh did, it must be reported to me."

With that the warden left the room.

Everybody who had been so far bullied by Abishekh congratulated us. We were too happy to worry about the three-day suspension. It did not dampen our spirits.

R. Praveen Kumar, Std. X A, DTEASSS, N. Delhi.

NOBEL FACTS

Every year since 1901 the Nobel Prizes are awarded at a glittering ceremony in Stockholm on the 10th of December, the occasion of the anniversary of Alfred Nobel.

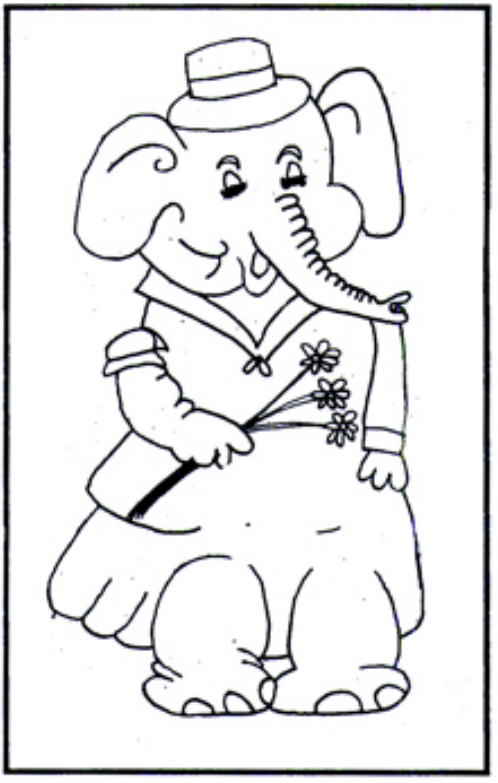
Nobel awards are made only to living persons. No single prize is given to a group larger than three persons. These prizes are given for the most significant work (rather than a life time's achievements) in Physics, Chemistry, Physiology, Medicine, Literature and Peace.

- Since 1901 upto 1999, 159 physicists from 15 different countries have won the prize.
- The USA has produced the maximum number of laureates (66) followed by Germany (23) and then the United Kingdom (21). The UK has not produced a physics laureate after 1977. C.V. Raman is the only Indian to have won the Nobel Prize in physics. S. Chandrasekhar had migrated to the USA long before he received the prize.
- There have been only two women laureates in physics. Marie Curie who won the prize in 1903 and Maria - Goeppert Mayer, the 1963 winner.
- The sons of four physics Nobelists went on to win the Nobel Prize in physics themselves.
- 18 physics laureates had fathers who were University Professors.
- The youngest laureate is the British physicist W.L. Bragg, who won the prize when he was just 25 years old. The oldest laureate is Peter Kapitza, a Russian who won the Nobel Prize in Physics at the age of 84.
- Alex Muller and Georg Bednorz had to wait for only a year after completing their prize winning research to win the Nobel Prize in 1987. Ernst Ruska, the 1986 winner had the longest waiting period of 45 years.

R. Mythili, Chennai

* S. Chandrasekhar. He was awarded Nobel prize as an Indian settled in the US.

R. Bhooma Saraswathy, X C,
Chennai.
Dear Bhooma, pl. send in the name of your school.

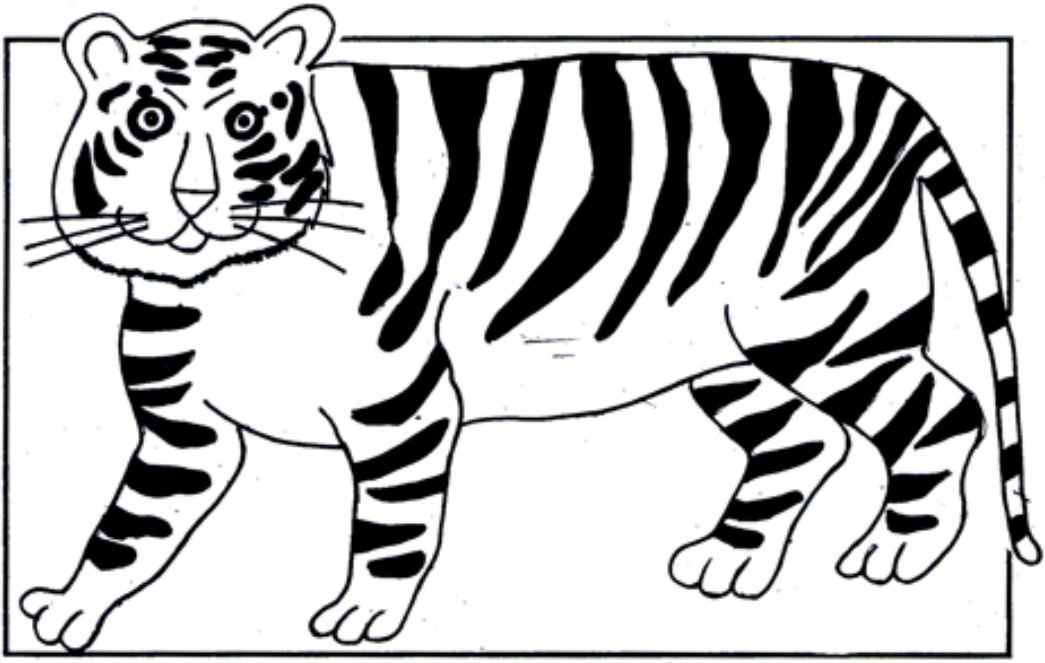


B. Jeevitha Agarwal, age 12,
St. Mary's School, Chennai.
Dear Jeevitha, pl. send your house address.

GOKULAM
Art Gallery

J. Ramya, VIII C,
MLA HS, Bangalore.

S.R. Andhal, VIII,
Ramnagar
Suburban MS,
Coimbatore.



Srivatsan, VII A,
Bethel MHSS, Chennai.

B. Nandita, III A,
Nirmala Convent,
Mysore.

Nisha P. Nair, IX,
St. Thomas HS, Goregaon (E),
Mumbai.

Ambarish Srivatsav,
age 13,
KV, Kalpakkam.

VIEWPOINT

Language bias

The Tamil Nadu government is interested in making Tamil the medium of instruction in schools. This is so, because Tamil is being neglected, by a large section of population, in favour of English.

It is not English alone that is being targetted. Students who have chosen languages like Hindi and French, will also be affected if the idea is implemented.

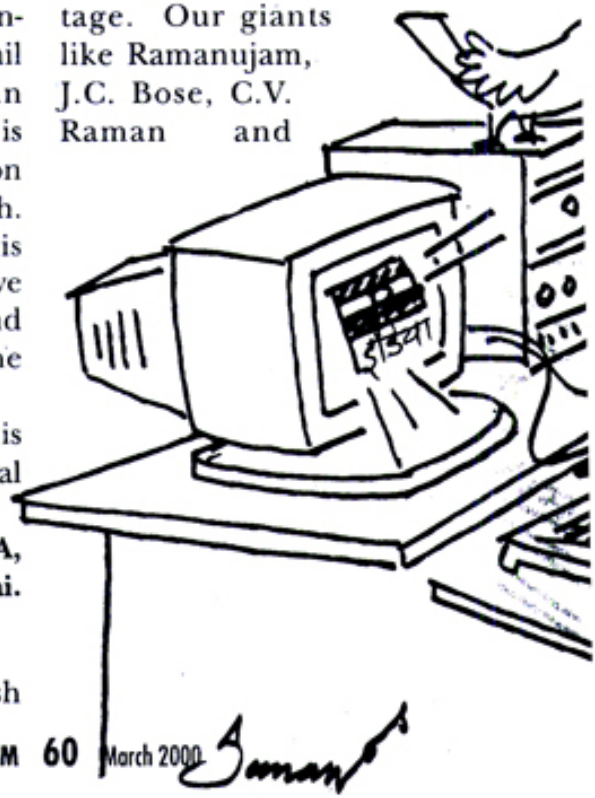
Versatility in various languages is bound to benefit both the individual and the state in the long run.

V. Ramkumar, Std. VIII A,
SBOA School, Madurai.

Why English?

With the advent of the British teaching of English came to India. The traders who entered India focussed only on trade relations, but the missionaries started schools where english was taught as one of the subjects. So long as the British ruled, the language continued to hold sway. With independence all this changed.

Our political and scientific thought has been influenced completely by this language. It is through English that we have shared the wisdom of the west and the west has shared with us our intellectual and spiritual heri - tage. Our giants like Ramanujam, J.C. Bose, C.V. Raman and



Homi Bhaba received world recognition only through English. It has today become the language of international trade and industry. It has made possible the exchange of knowledge.

English is our major window on the world. If we close this window we will shut ourselves within the four walls of nationality. Modern science will be lost to us. We may never get to read the large number of books published in English.

Abolishing English will pave way for self-destruction.

Abolishing the teaching of English language will only pave way for self-destruction. It should be a compulsory subject of study for some years in school.

L.R. Phanindra, II PUC., B.E.L. PU College, Bangalore.

To be an Indian

Five years ago, all my cousins and I decided that we would go abroad for higher studies. When the eldest cousin left to pursue her higher studies, I thought that she was the luckiest of all. Five years later she returned to India. She was pleasantly surprised to see that the airport provided e-mail facility. The STD/ISD booths that had sprung up in every nook and corner made her comment that India had taken giant strides in many walks of life.

I am now convinced that there is no country better than India. We have among us men who have specialised in fields like genetics. Dr. Bala Murali Krishna has the distinction of having become a doctor at the young age of 12!

India has a rich religious and

cultural identity. The Brigadeeshwar temple of Tanjore is still considered an engineering marvel. Some of the exquisite Indian jewellery displayed in museums in other countries bear testimony to India's wealth.

Yet, today Indian students dream of living in the US or the UK. They forget that India is vast in its resources, magnanimous in its religious tolerance and offers excellent job opportunities. Before seeking pastures outside the country each student should think whether he is doing the right thing.

Is he right in rejecting the country that has given him basic education and taught him the value of freedom?

N. Ajay, VIII F,
PSBBSSS, Chennai.

So complete, yet so incomplete

Education in India is all about memorising books. We learn by rote all questions and answers and repeat them during exams. We study to impress our parents or for fear of punishment from teachers and parents. Education in India demands a high ability to memorise. Co-curricular activities are given the go by. So, a person who lacks the skill of learning by rote falls by the wayside.

If you can't learn by rote you fall by the wayside!

Most of what we read at school is not needed when we enter college and later in life they are hardly used. In order to develop our memory we even resort to gulping down syrups and swallowing pills that promise better memory! When will all this change?

P.R. Arun, Std. X,
Christ Nagar School, Trivandrum.

21st century India

Indian roads will be clean. The roads will have lush, green trees on either side. People will not fight among themselves in the name of religion. There will be no pollution in cities. Children and women won't have to fear attack when they walk on the road. There won't be robberies and thefts. Animals won't be killed for gain. The country will be at peace with its neighbours.

B. Krishna Swathi, age 9,
PSBBSSS, Chennai.

THE SEED PILE

Once emperor Akbar threw a grand banquet for his courtiers. It was a feast to remember. Attending the feast was worth walking even a hundred miles. Akbar himself invited everyone. People thronged to the palace. Nobody wanted to miss the royal feast.

Many types of dishes were served. The courtiers vied with one another for the emperor's attention. But, Akbar's eyes were on his favourite, Birbal. He seated Birbal next to him and thoroughly enjoyed the meal.

Birbal entertained him throughout the meal with his witty stories.

After the meal, different fruits were served to all. Akbar sat with Birbal with a bowl of dates before them. As they were conversing, they ate the dates. Soon, there were two piles of seeds. Akbar noticed this. An idea struck Akbar. He pushed his pile of seeds into that of Birbal's pile of seeds. Birbal hadn't noticed Akbar's action.

Suddenly Akbar said loudly as though he was surprised, "Why Birbal, do you think it is wise of you to eat so many dates? I did not know you were such a greedy man".

Immediately, everybody turned towards Birbal. Akbar wondered how he would manage to wriggle out of this embarrassing situation. Birbal looked at the pile of seeds. He noticed that there were no seeds near the king's bowl of dates. He knew very well that he had not eaten so many dates.

It was one of Akbar's pranks.

Calmly, Birbal turned to Akbar and said loud enough for everyone to hear, "Your majesty, I agree that I am a greedy man. I have eaten only the fruits and thrown away the seeds. But you have eaten the seeds too, along with the fruits."

Now it was Akbar's turn to be embarrassed. Once again Birbal had had the last word.

M. Narayani, Chennai.

Dear Narayani, pl. send in your age and the name of your school.

THE GALAGO

Galago is a tree-dwelling African animal known for its ability to leap great distances among the branches. Galagos jump with their long hind legs as frogs do. Some galagos can leap 4.5 metres. The largest of the nine species is about the size of a large squirrel, and the smallest is only 15 cms long, excluding the tail. Galagos belong to an order of animals called primates, which also includes apes.

Galagos which are sometimes called "bush babies" sleep during day and become active at night. Their large eyes help them see well in the dark. Galagos feed on many kind of insects and also eat small birds, eggs, fruits, lizards and sap from trees.

A galago has soft woolly fur and a long tail. Its fingers, toes and soles have fleshy pads that help it grasp tree branches and trunks. They comb their fur with the lower front teeth. The teeth are also used for scraping away bark from trees to obtain sap and gum for food.

Abhay Kumar, Std. VIII B, KV, Surat.

Dear Abhay, pl. send your house address.

MYTHOLOGY

A

Ekalayva was a tribal boy who often used to watch Dronacharya teach the Pandava and the Kaurava princes. Dronacharya was an ace archer. His favourite student was Arjuna, the Pandava prince.

Ekalayva wanted to learn to use the bow and arrow. He approached Dronacharya with a request to teach him archery. Dronacharya, however, refused. He said that Ekalayva was not a Kshatriya and therefore he couldn't learn archery. Archery was the privilege of the Kshatriyas.

The disheartened Ekalayva made a crude statue of Drona and installed it in the forest. Everyday he would garland the statue with flowers and then pay his respects to the statue as if it were a living being. Then he began practising archery.

One day Dronacharya and the Pandava princes were passing by the forest. A dog had followed them inside the forest. Just as they were approaching a clearing, the dog began barking. Ekalayva who noticed the dog began to aim arrows at the dog's mouth. Soon, the dog's mouth was full of arrows. Drona who saw this was aghast.

"I thought Arjuna was the best archer. So, who is this who has a way with the bow and arrow? Reveal yourself."

Ekalayva appeared before Drona and said, "It is I, O great man."

"And who is your teacher?" Drona asked.

DEVOTED STUDENT

"The great Drona, the teacher of Pandavas."

Ekalayva bowed before the teacher. "But I have never taken you for a student" Drona said.

"I have made a statue of you and have made you my teacher in my heart."

"Then you owe me gurudakshina. A student cannot use his skill unless he has paid the teacher his fees."

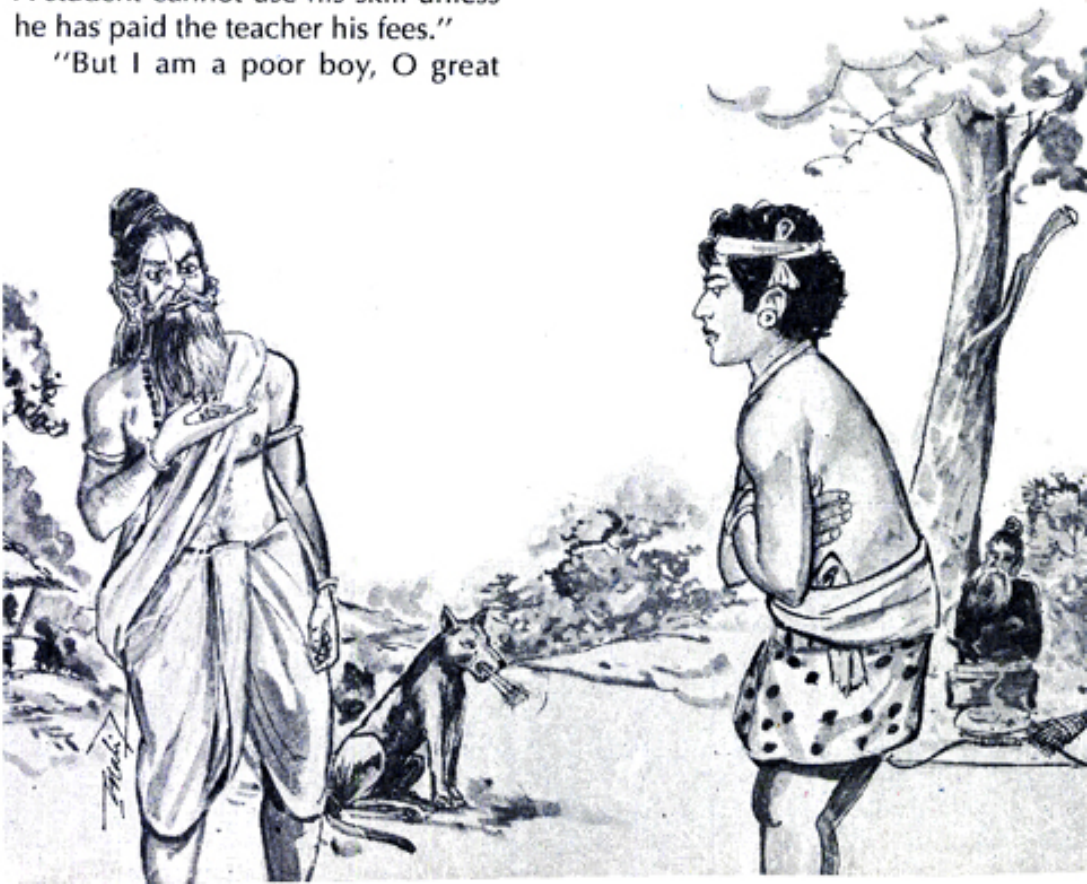
"But I am a poor boy, O great teacher."

"That you may be. But I still need my fees."

Dronacharya thought for a while. He remembered his promise to make Arjuna the best archer in the world. He realised that Ekalayva would definitely surpass Arjuna were a test of skill to be held. So, he said, "I want your left thumb as gurudakshina."

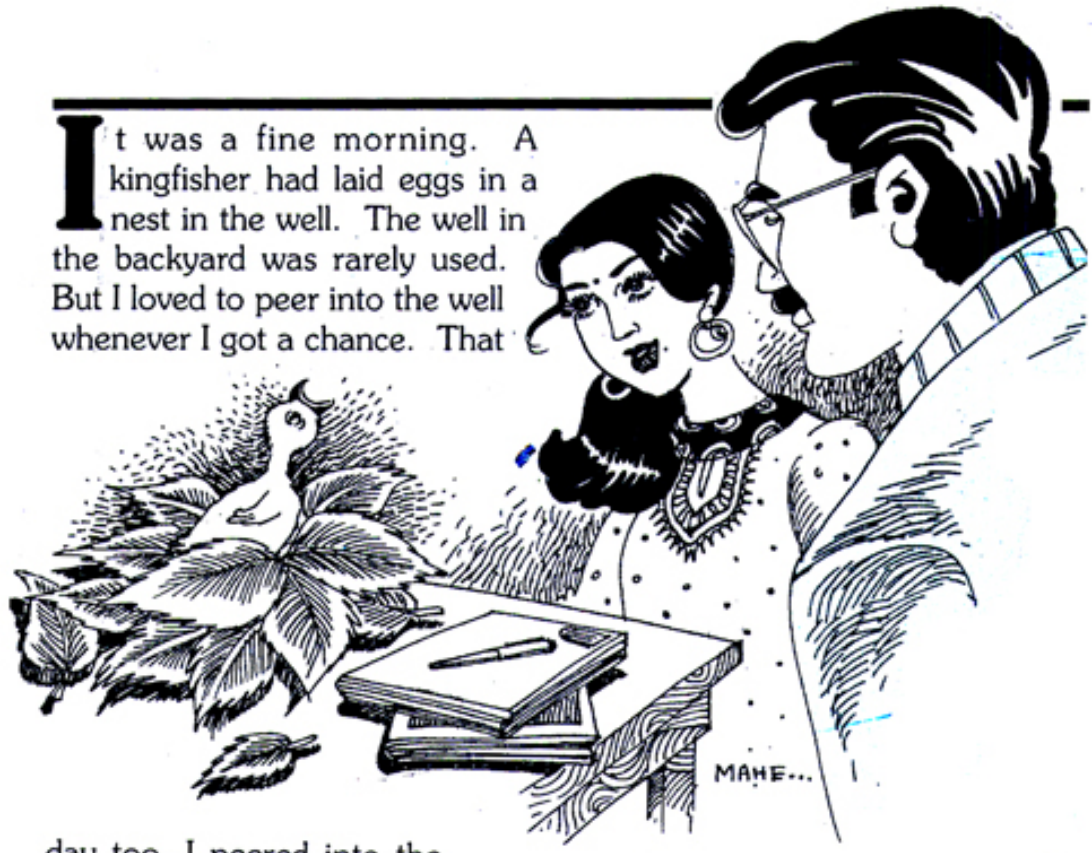
Ekalayva didn't hesitate and paid the fee due to his teacher. He cut off his thumb.

Sudha Narayanan, age 16,
Rosary MHSS, Chennai.



CHIRPY

It was a fine morning. A kingfisher had laid eggs in a nest in the well. The well in the backyard was rarely used. But I loved to peer into the well whenever I got a chance. That day too, I peered into the well as usual.



Over the past few days, I had noticed two kingfishers fly in and out of our compound. Mother said that the birds were trying to find a suitable place to build a nest. How right she had been.

Today when I peered into the well, I saw a clutch of eggs in the nest built in a crack in the wall of the well. I was excited. I said we'd soon be watching the eggs hatch and then the mother bird would feed the babies. Then the birds would learn to fly.

Mother laughed at my fortune-telling. She said, "hold your horses. Let's wait and watch." I was prepared for a long wait.

Soon, the eggs hatched. I'd peer into the well everyday and watch the chicks. One day it was past noon. I was in the backyard digging a pit. I planned to sow a mango seed later in the evening. Just then

there was a splash and loud chirping from the well.

I peeped into the well. Something was wrong. One chick was missing in the nest. It had fallen into the water. I rushed home. I told my father what had happened.

He wasted no time. He lowered a bucket and removed the struggling bird. We named it Chirpy.

I spread a few dried leaves and cotton wool so that the bird could rest in warmth. I placed the bird in a warm corner of the room. I gathered earthworms from the garden for the rescued bird. That night there was a heavy down- pour. Chirpy fell ill the next day. She shook uncontrollably for sometime and then died. We were very upset that day.

The next day we rescued three more chicks which had fallen the same way. My sisters named them, Chippy, Chappy and Choppy. Of these three birds, Chappy was the eldest. She flew away the next day when I placed the cardboard box containing the chicks on the terrace.

The mother bird found her chicks that afternoon. To my utter shock, the mother bird ignored Chippy. When Chippy tried to edge closer to her, the mother bird pecked her on her neck. The baby bird sustained plenty of injuries on her neck. The next day Chippy was dead. The mother bird taught Choppy to fly. By noon, the mother bird had flown away with Choppy.

I saw a clutch of eggs in the nest. I was prepared to wait.

Choppy is now a big bird. At times she sits on the TV antenna. Everytime I see Choppy, I recall the way Chippy and Chirpy had died.

R. Lavayna, Std. IX B,
St. James MHSS, Trichy.

GRANDMA WORM

I am six years old. I don't have many friends in my colony. Other children in my colony have made many friends. I have many friends in school. My sister, who is older, has friends in the colony and at school. She throws a party every year during the holidays. I too want to throw a party.

T. Karthick, PSSSS, Chennai.

Dear Karthick,

You are still very young. Parties may mean extra work for your mother. However, you could ask your mother if she can manage a party for your birthday which will help you to make friends in your colony.

I am in standard VII. I have many friends but no best friend. How do I find a best friend? Everyone is the best friend of someone else.

M. Kamali, DAVSSS, Chennai.

Dear Kamali,

If you have been studying in the same school since the beginning you may tend to forge a close bond with one or two classmates.

However, if you change schools often, you may only have acquaintances. Sometimes you may strike a friendship with someone who is not your classmate! You and your best friend often share similar tastes in dress, food, education and even hobbies.

I am in Std. IX. My favourite subject is maths. Yet, I am unable to score more than 90 percent. How do I avoid careless mistakes? I want to score centum.

S. Saranya Devi, IX A,
Subramania Bharatiyar School, Pondicherry.

I am in Std. VII. I concentrate

very well in maths class. I score well in class tests but lose out marks during exams. Please help.

Kokila S. Kumar,
St. Joseph of Cluny,
Pondicherry.

Dear Saranya and Kokila,

Check your paper twice before handing the answer sheets over to the teacher. Go through each step. Check the results and above all concentrate on the test paper.

I am a CBSE student studying in Std. VII. I scored far below my own

expectation at the prep. exams, held recently. My parents are scolding me for this. How do I score 95 percent?

C.K. Anupama, age 12,
Balodyana Eng. School, Mysore.

Dear Anupama,

Find out why you scored less. Did you miss out questions? Were you ill - prepared for the exams? Did you take the exams easy since they were only prepara-

How can I throw a party? How can one score 100 in maths?

tory exams? I am sure you will score well in the upcoming exams once you find answers to these questions. Devote as much effort to prep. exams as you would to annual exams.

I am a student of class VIII. I used to score 95 percent in science and maths upto class VI. Now I score only 80 percent. Subjects like life-science and geometry are proving a bane where marks are concerned. Please help.

Suman Nandi, KV 1, Kalaikunda

Dear Suman,

Take your teacher's help. Ask

her to help you out with the difficult lessons. Work out problems in geometry and devote extra time to life-science. Since the subjects are new to you, you may be a little tense.

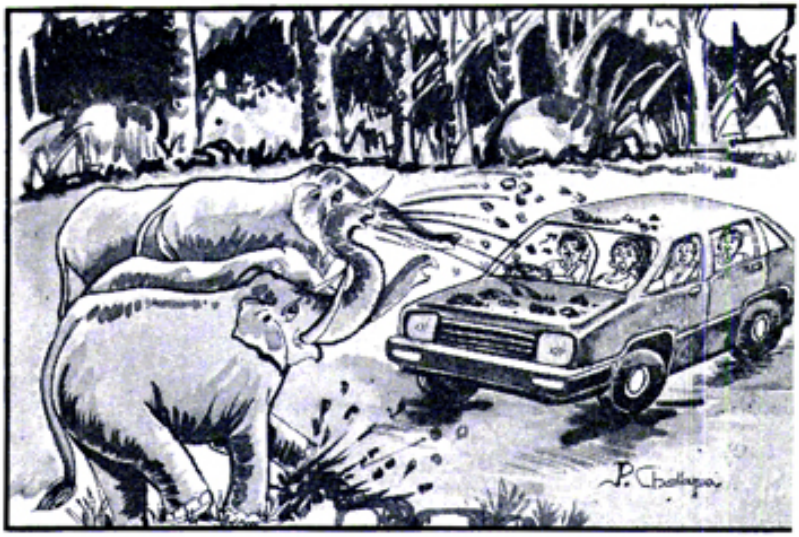
Love,
Grandma worm

A FOREST ADVENTURE

The Bose family had decided to spend their vacation at the Chatla forest this time. Chatla forest was situated 45 miles from their town.

The forest was popular as the abode of elephants.

Mr. Bose and his family set out by car early in the morning for the forest. They were merely two miles from the forest when the car's horn stopped functioning. Just outside the forest Mr. Bose spotted a shop. The shop sold accessories for cars.



The shop-keeper showed him a variety of horns. Mr. Bose chose a particular contraption. The shop keeper suggested other types of horns. But Mr. Bose would have none of it.

Finally, the shop keeper gave in.

He fitted the horn and Mr. Bose paid up. Soon, the Bose family was on its way to the forest guest house. When they were half-way through the forest, Mr. Bose suddenly applied the brakes. In front of the car, stood a huge tusker. Mr. Bose sounded the horn.

To the family's utter horror, the elephant grabbed a trunkful of dust and flung it at the car. Mr. Bose asked his family to raise the window shutters.

By now five more elephants had arrived on the scene. They trumpeted and flung mud on the

car. Mr. Bose and his family were terrified. After about an hour, the elephants dispersed. Mr. Bose stepped on the accelerator and drove to the forest guest house.

He blew the horn to announce his arrival. Two guards ran down the steps. They were armed with guns.

Mr. Bose was startled. The guards looked at him in amazement. "Was it your vehicle that sound came from?" they wanted to know.

"Yes," said Mr. Bose and returned to the car to blow the horn again. One of the guards stalled him. "Don't you know that is the kind of noise a dying elephant makes? Other elephants of the herd will collect around the dying elephant and spray dust on their dying mate, when they hear this call."

That explained the strange behaviour of the elephants, thought Mr. Bose. He recalled how he had not sounded the horn the rest of the way to the forest guest house.

Aditi Goswami, Std. VII,
Rajendra Vidhyalaya,
Jamshedpur.

TODAY'S MY DAY

Today is a pleasant day,
The sun is shining warm again,
Birds are out of their nest,
To feed their young ones.

Today is a pleasant day,
Birds are twittering,
They are making melodious sounds,
Which I love to hear.

Today is a pleasant day,
The clouds are white,
The grass is green,
And the cows are grazing.

Today is a pleasant day,
I'd love to go to school today,
Play with my friends,
And learn my lessons, the nature's way!

Ramya Sai, Std. VI,
B.V. Reddy School, Chittoor.

WHY SAVE WATER?

Earth consists of three parts water and one part land. This allows for a temperature range that permits water to exist in its three phases - ice, water and vapour. The transfer of water among these phases is responsible for rain and snow, thus replenishing our water reserves. Life cannot exist on Earth in the absence of water. This is why scientists are always interested in knowing if there is water or traces of water in any one of its phases, on the Earth's moon or any other planet in our solar system!

Of all the water on the Earth's surface, approximately only three percent is fresh water. Of this fresh water, about 77% is locked up in the polar ice caps or the huge glaciers in various parts of the Earth (some of these glaciers are in the Himalayan regions). Twenty two percent of water can be found under earth's crust. Thus the remaining one percent of the fresh water is split up in the form of snow, soil moisture, fresh water lakes, rivers and water vapour in the atmosphere.

Meagre are the reserves of water that is conducive for drinking! This is why we should be more aware of that leaking or running tap. Pull up the maid when she unnecessarily allows the tap to run. All this water finally goes down the drain-pipe making it useless for drinking. The sewage water is finally let into the river. It mixes with the ground water causing soil and water pollution. A little care will help to preserve this invaluable gift.

Dr. Poonam Mehra, Mumbai.

KOKU

"Ma! The vegetable wali has come! Do we need anything?" Brother Undir called out. "Yes, hold on! I'm coming!" replied Mama Undir. So Brother asked her to wait. She was just a young one with a basket full of vegetables on her head. She asked Brother to help her set the basket down. Soon Brother started talking to her as they waited for Mama. "Don't you go to school?" he asked.

The vegetable wali grinned and shook her head. "What's your name?" Brother asked.

"Koku" she replied.

Soon Sister and Mama Undir joined them. "You've come alone today! Where is your Amma?" Mama Undir asked. "She's ill, so I've come alone. Take what you want... I'll give you a good bargain! I know you're one of my Amma's regular customers!"

While they were choosing vegetables, Koku rocked to and fro on the gate, chatting with Brother. "I did go to school you know, but now I don't!"

"Why?"

"I like being with my mother, helping with the vegetables. I used to be scared of my teacher and hated the exams! Besides, the real reason is that I had to drop out when my father left us..."

"Isn't it bad? Why did he leave?" Sister was also interested now.

"He left because he had another wife. It's quite better now. No more beatings, drinking, taking away our

money... My little brother doesn't cry any more and sometimes my Amma even smiles!"

Mama finished choosing some nice potatoes, half a kilo of onions, fresh beans and some brinjals. "Yuck! I hate brinjals!" complained Brother, "Please, why not just buy potatoes!"

"But then I'll get less money!" said Koku, mischief in her eyes.

Mama laughed, "So you will have to eat brinjals from now on!"

As Mama Undir picked up some ginger, fresh green chillies and curry leaves, Brother made a face. "Curry leaves! They get stuck in your mouth and you can't eat them!"

"Curry leaves have a nice flavour! I always chew them up. What a fuss you make!" remarked Koku.

"You should see my sister with her milk! That's real fuss!" replied Brother. "Don't you ever make a fuss, Koku?"

"I used to, when there was no food or when my father ate up all the rice without leaving any for us! But now I'm big, so I've stopped."

Mama Undir went inside and brought some money to pay Koku. "How much, child?" she asked.

Quickly Koku calculated, mumbling numbers - weights multiplied by prices and added it all up. "Mmm twenty one rupees. The chillies and curry leaves are for free!"

As Mama paid, Brother was most impressed by Koku's arithmetic. "Are you sure she's got it right? Even my Maths teacher is not that good at mental sums!"

"Ey! I'm not cheating you! You

Elderly woman : Look at the girl over there. She looks like a boy. She's wearing jeans, her haircut is so boyish. You wouldn't know if she was a girl would you?

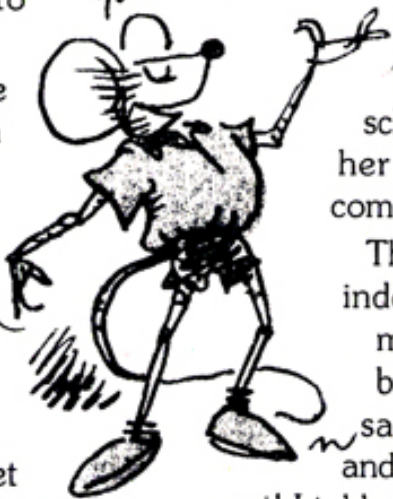
Lady : It so happens I would 'cos she is my daughter.

Elderly woman : Oh! I am so sorry. I didn't know you were her father.

Lady : No I am her mother!

try and calculate if you like!" Koku was indignant.

"It's not that!" explained Sister. "He's surprised that you are so good at counting even though you don't go to school!"



"I should be! I've been doing this with my Ma for two years! What will Ma think if I can't do the work by myself even now!"

Mama Undir paid her and Koku left, picking up her basket with some help from Sister. "Tomorrow I'll come with my Amma pushing our cart! We have a new one now! So we have more vegetables to sell! But I can't push it by myself yet, my hands ache!"

Sister and Brother were rather impressed by Koku. "How come she is so cheerful?" Brother asked. "I'll give her some of my clothes" Sister said. Koku had made both of them think. Was it not child labour? Should Koku not be in school? "We'll talk to her the next time she comes!" suggested Sister.

The next day Koku did indeed come with her mother and baby brother. Smartly she saluted Mama Undir and said, "See our new cart! I told you, didn't I?"

Sister and Brother came out to meet her. While the two mothers were busy selecting and weighing vegetables, the children got talking again. "But

---

Teacher : Spell wrong.

Student : R-O-N-G!

Teacher : That's wrong!

Student : That's what you asked me to spell wasn't it?

Aparna Renganathan, age 15,
DAV Girl's Senior Secondary School,
Chennai.

then who will help my mother with our business if I don't?" Koku protested when pressed about why she did not go to school. "But what about child labour? Should you not study and be in

school? It's good for you!"

"Good? I'm not sure!" protested Koku's mother. "Her teacher used to punish her. She used to get diarrhoea before her exams! And the weight of her school bag!"

"It's because of my school bag practice that I have no problem carrying loads now!" explained Koku, tossing her long braid back.

"That's quite true!" thought Sister Undir. Brother also nodded, thinking about his heavy bag, tests and exams.

"But I really miss drawing and colouring! If you have some crayons and old newspapers..."

"She's crazy about making pictures. Half our walls are full! The house owner is going to throw us out one day!" said Koku's mother, giving Koku a gentle knock on her head.

"Wait a minute!" exclaimed Brother, running in. He came back with a box of crayons of various sizes and colours and handed them to Koku. "But where's the paper! I'll get into more trouble if I make more pictures on our walls!"

Sister gave her a drawing note book to use. "Let me know when it is used up!" she said. Koku practically grabbed it out of Sister's hands in delight!

Koku had given them a lot to think about. How cheerful she was in spite of her hard life! Full time schooling was really a luxury to be thankful for, thought Sister. But was it really? In some ways Brother and Sister envied Koku's free life with no loads of books and pressure of tests and exams! Which was child labour and which was not?

Anuradha Khati

LAURELS TO INDIANS

Tennis

The Indians were nowhere in the picture in the Australian open championship. Paes bowed out early. Andre Agassi of the US won his second Australian open tennis crown. This is his sixth grand slam title. Agassi is the first player to reach four straight grand slam titles since Rod Laver. The Australian had performed the same feat in 1969.

Lindsay Davenport took the women's singles crown. She beat world no. 1 Martina Hingis 6-1, 7-5. The game lasted only 65 minutes. This is the third grand slam loss for Hingis.

• Agassi

• Davenport

Cricket

The senior cricket team returned home with no laurels. A postmortem is on about their dismal performance in Australia in the tri-series match.

Australia has once again proved difficult to win. The finals between Australia and Pakistan was not a sizzler though a tough one.

The under-19 Indian team for World Cup returned winners, much to the pleasure of cricket lovers.

The finals between Srilanka and India seemed a tough match at the beginning. The home team was all out for 178 runs. The Indians began sedately enough. But by the 40th over they had emerged clear victors. The Indian team piled up 180 run in 40.4 overs losing four wickets.

India lands gold

At the Asian shooting championship Indian women landed team gold at one of the events.

SPORTS PAGE

THEY SAVED HUMAN LIVES

We love adventures. Most of us often lead mundane lives. Sometimes some of us encounter situations that require presence of mind and courage. These incidents show up our character and ability to handle difficult situations.

Every year, in India children who have exhibited exceptional courage are decorated with bravery awards. These children may be from remote villages and may lack even basic needs. These are children who expose themselves to danger in order to save human lives.

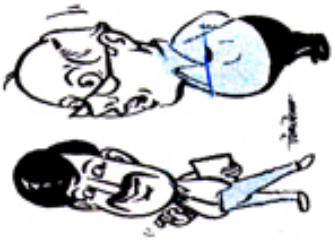
The awards are presented by the Prime Minister sometime before the Republic Day at New Delhi. The children ride on an elephant on the Republic Day. They follow the route taken by the colourful tableaus and the parade. The nation gets to see these courageous children. These children are given edcuational allowance besides reservation in engineering and medical colleges. Several other concessions are also granted by the central government.

This year 15 children were chosen for the bravery awards. Three of them were Tamilians — two girls from Velur district and a boy from Pondicherry.

The two girls, S. Suguna and S. Kavitha are students of the Hindu High School, Athimagulapatti village of Velur district. The village falls under Vaniyambadi Taluk.

It was July. The intermittent rains often bring in its wake flash floods. Suguna and Kavitha were returning from school one afternoon. A little ahead of them three little boys Manoharan aged six, Manikandan, aged eight and Ananthan, aged nine, were trying to cross

Employer : For this job, we need someone who is responsible.
Applicant : That's me. On my last job, whenever anything went wrong, they always said I was responsible.
M. Rajesh Jain, Chennai.

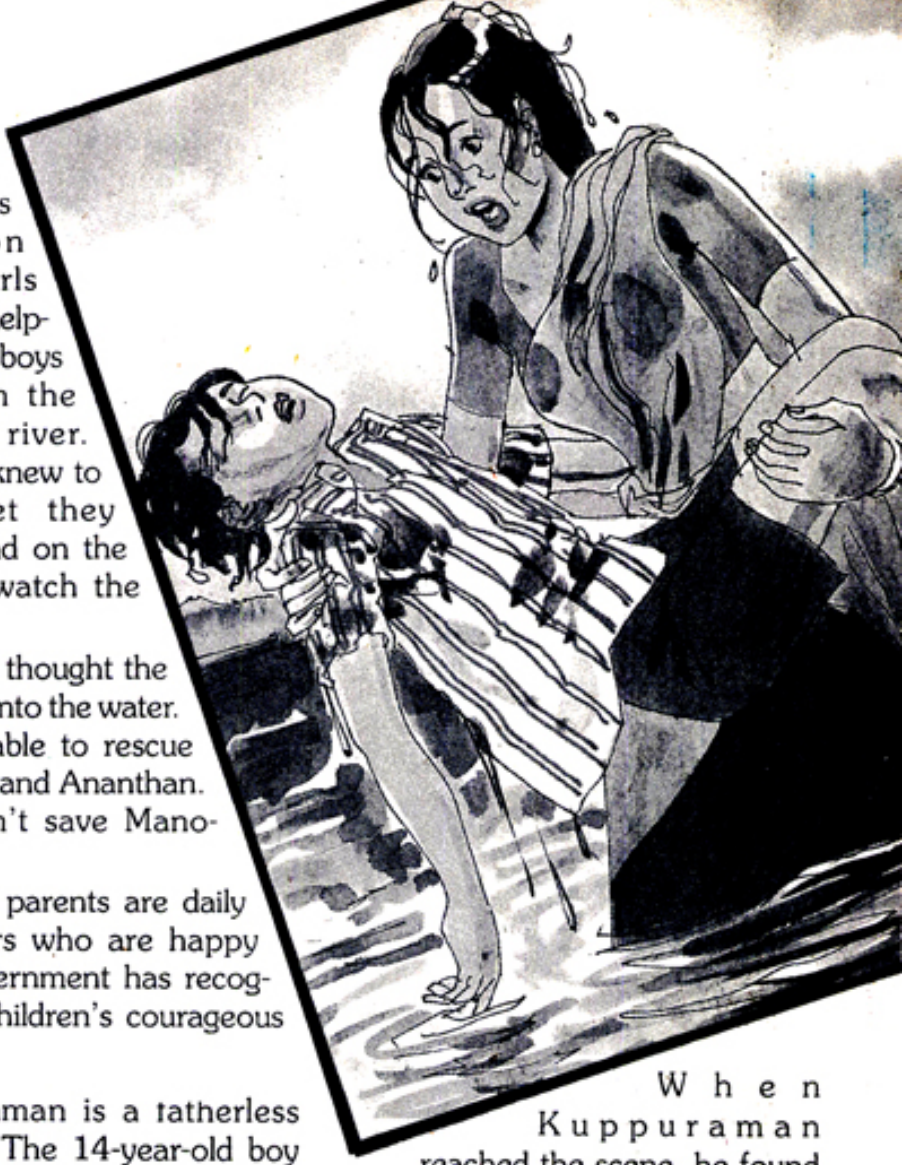


the river.

Suddenly there was commotion and the girls watched on helplessly as the boys struggled in the flooded river. Neither girl knew to swim. Yet they couldn't stand on the banks and watch the boys drown.

Without a thought the girls jumped into the water. They were able to rescue Manikandan and Ananthan. They couldn't save Manoharan.

The girls' parents are daily wage earners who are happy that the government has recognised their children's courageous spirit.



Kuppuraman is a fatherless child. The 14-year-old boy catches up with his studies as he herds cows. One November afternoon in 1998, he was studying for the half-yearly exams when he heard someone shout for help. Beyond his village is a river that often runs dry. Both adults and children often walk across the river since the water level is rather low. That season it had rained considerably.

Heavy rains and powerful currents rendered crossing difficult.

When Kuppuraman reached the scene, he found three children — Sudha (12), Parimala (11) and Sastri (10) trying to wade through the currents.

Kuppuraman wasted no time. He jumped into the river and saved the children.

His brave deed came to light when Parimala recalled the incident to a teacher at her school.

Kuppuraman wants to become a doctor.

ANSWER PAGE

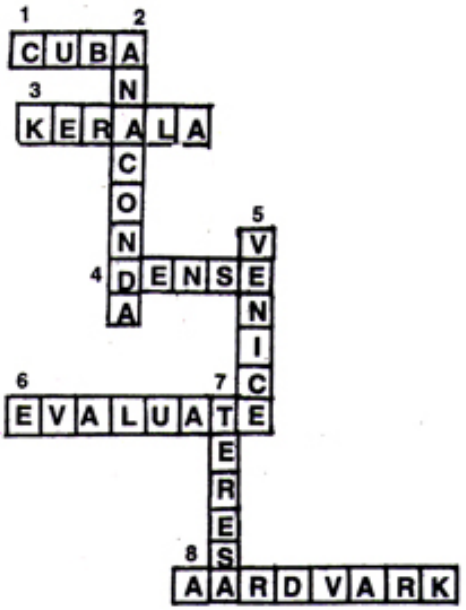
Active Materials, 6. Nathuram Vinayak Godse, 7. Water borne germs, 8. Andromeda Galaxy

MATCH THE SCIENTISTS WITH THEIR WORKS

1. f, 2. i, 3. g, 4. j, 5. h, 6. a, 7. e, 8. c, 9. d, 10. b.

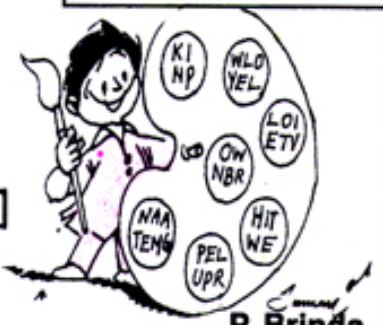
FIND THE SEVEN GEOMETRY RELATIONS

A	U	T	S	E	J	E	A	D	R
O	N	R	U	E	P	L	F	H	U
S	Z	G	V	R	Z	C	K	N	W
Q	B	H	L	G	X	R	P	S	Z
U	F	I	K	E	W	I	X	Y	B
A	J	O	L	D	S	C	T	A	V
R	E	C	T	A	N	G	L	E	Q
E	R	A	D	I	U	S	I	J	O
S	A	K	B	Q	T	Y	C	E	G
T	R	I	A	N	G	L	E	S	B



QUIZ

1. Cosmos, 2. Punjab, 3. Ozone layer, 4. Buland Darwaza, 5. Radio



FIND THE COLOURS

P. Brinda,
SNMM School,
Coimbatore.

pink, Yellow, Violet, Brown, White, Magenta.

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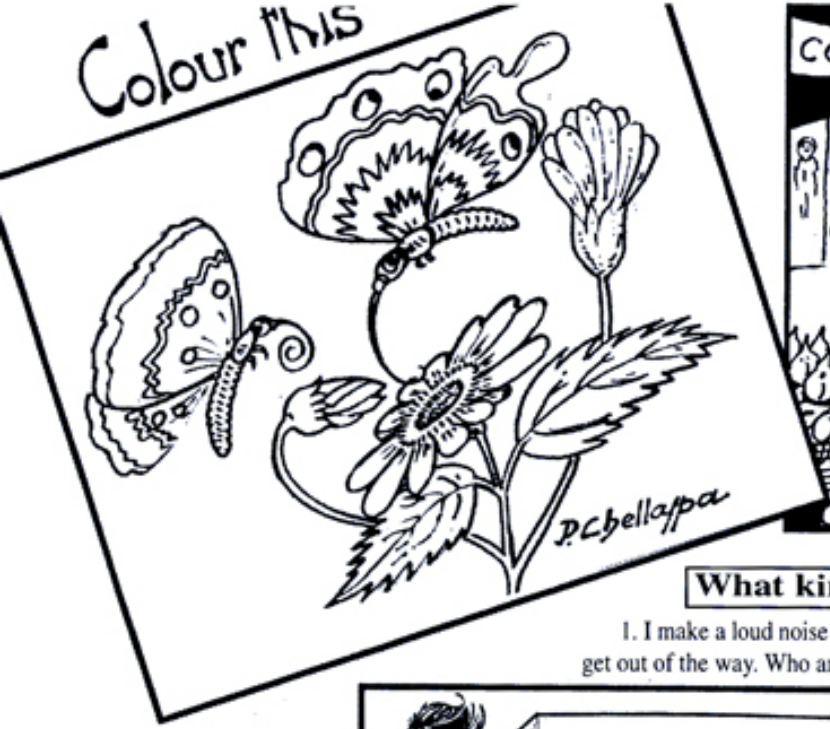


Judge : Why did you kill your husband with a knife when you had a pistol?

Culprit : Because I did not want to disturb my sleeping children.

Archana, Arun and Arvind Sriram, Std. VI, Hindu SSS, Chennai.

What kind of vehicle am I?

1. I make a loud noise with my siren and bell so that other vehicles get out of the way. Who am I?

2. I make an ee-o ee-o sound and flash my redlight as I move. Who am I?

3. I'm very strong and push earth or stone around. Who am I?

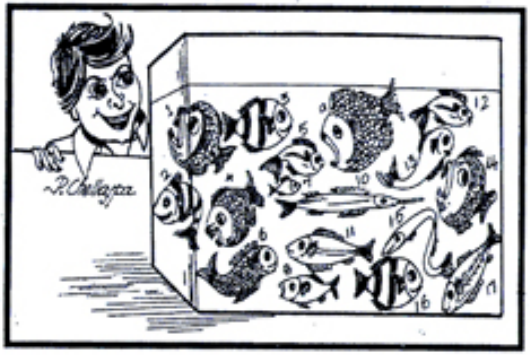
4. I can carry lots of people at one time. Who am I?

5. I'm red all over and carry all things all over town. Who am I?

Ans: 1. Fire engine, 2. Ambulance, 3. Bulldozer, 4. Bus, 5. Mail van.

M. Vinodh, Cuddalore.

Find the two similar fish



Ans: 3, 16

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